MARVEL

FANTASTIC FOUR

BY JONATHAN HICKMAN

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

THE WORLD'S GREATEST
COMIC MAGAZINE

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FANTASTIC FOUR

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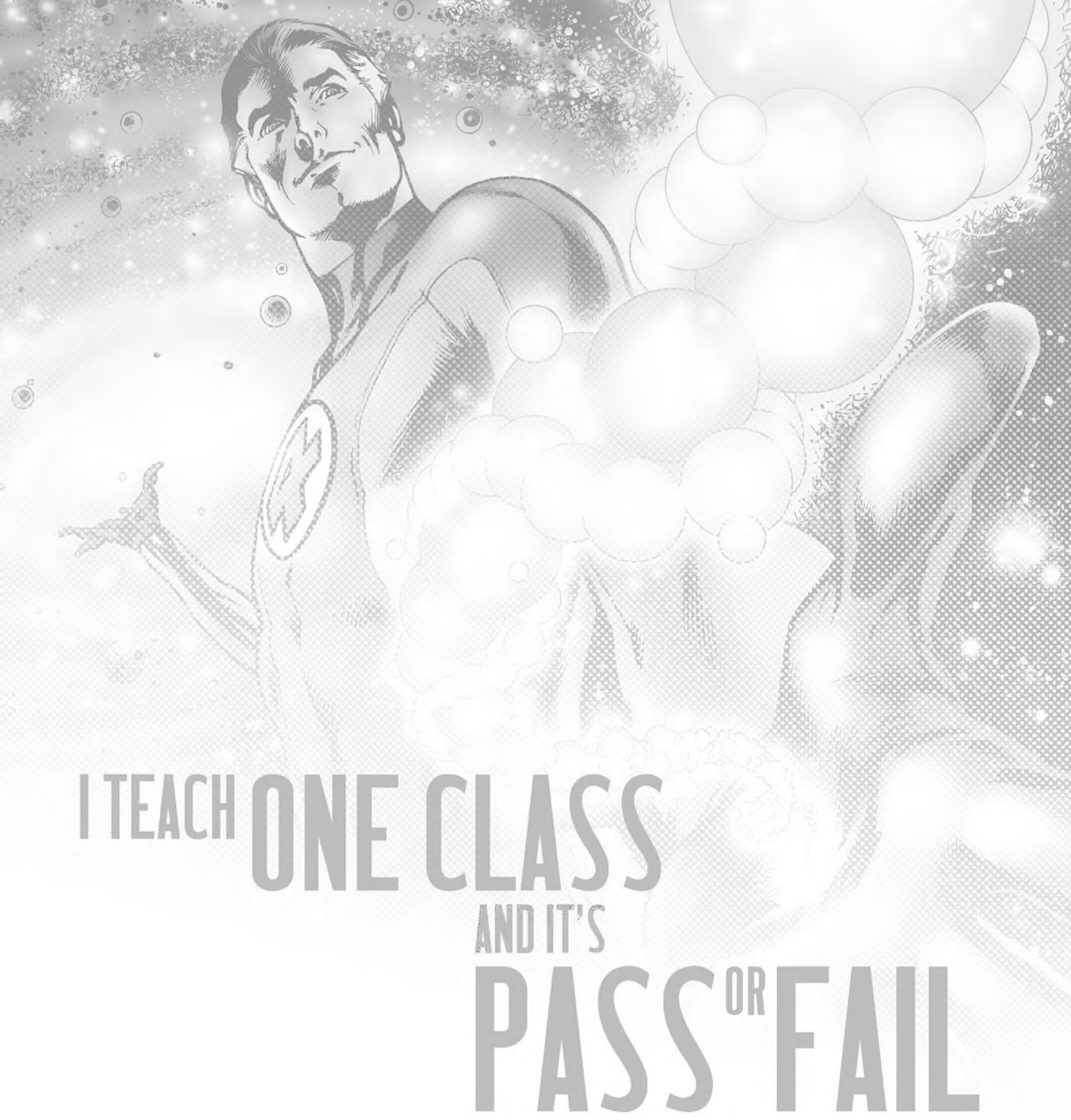
THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE

FANTASTIC FOUR

VOL THREE

THE FUTURE FOUNDATION


I TEACH ONE CLASS
AND IT'S
PASS OR FAIL

4 SINGULARITY 2010. GOLDEN, COLORADO.

AS WE BRING TO A CLOSE THIS YEAR'S SINGULARITY CONFERENCE, WHO BETTER TO SEND US ON OUR WAY THAN THIS FORUM'S FOUNDER AND A TRUE TITAN OF MODERN SCIENCE?

LET'S WELCOME REED RICHARDS, EVERYONE.

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

THANK YOU, ROBERT.

AND TO THINK... THIS ALL STARTED WITH 30 PEOPLE IN A SMALL ROOM... JUST LOOK AT HOW MUCH WE'VE GROWN.

WHEN THIS CONFERENCE BEGAN TEN YEARS AGO, I PICTURED A PLACE WHERE THE GREATEST MINDS OF A GENERATION COULD COME TOGETHER AND NOT ONLY EXAMINE THE PROBLEMS THAT CURRENTLY CONFRONT US, BUT ALSO AGGRESSIVELY LOOK INTO THE FUTURE...

TO ENVISION THE DIRECTION IN WHICH HUMANITY SHOULD BE HEADED...AND BOLDLY STEER US THERE.

IN ESSENCE: TO ASK--AND THEN ANSWER--THE HARD QUESTIONS.

IN THAT SPIRIT, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE JENNIFER WALTERS FOR HER SPEECH YESTERDAY.

HER KEYNOTE, "THE IMPENDING LEGAL AND MORAL DILEMMAS OF GENETIC ENGINEERING: SYNTHETICALLY CREATED HUMANITY--PROPERTY OR PERSON?" DISPLAYED THE EXACT KIND OF INSIGHT THIS CONFERENCE WAS BUILT ON.

IT'S UNFORTUNATE THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR THE REST OF YOU.

DR. CHANG'S SPEECH, "APPROACHING INFINITY: THE DREAM OF AN ENERGY NEUTRAL LIFE" WAS A TOUR-DE-FORCE IN NEO-LUDDITE IDEOLOGY...

POLITICS MASQUERADING AS PRACTICALITY.

AND YOU, THOMAS..."SCIENCE'S SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE NECESSARY SUSPENSION OF MANNED SPACE MISSIONS IN A GLOBAL RECESSION"...

TRULY DISAPPOINTING.

singularity

I'VE SPENT THE WEEKEND WALKING AROUND IN A DAZE WONDERING, WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE GREAT MEN AND WOMEN THAT HELPED DEFINE THE LEGACY OF THIS PLACE?

AND THEN LAST NIGHT I FIGURED IT OUT...

YOU'VE GROWN OLD.

HERE, AT THE END OF HUMAN HISTORY, WE SIT ON THE VERGE OF A TRANSFORMATIVE TIME.

NEVER HAVE WE LIVED LONGER, EATEN BETTER, WORKED LESS, OR POSSESSED MORE THINGS.

WE ARE MORE ADVANCED THAN ANY SPECIES THAT HAS EVER WALKED THE EARTH, AND NOW, WITH OUR PROMETHEAN URGE TRULY UNLEASHED, WE STAND ON THE PRECIPICE OF SCIENTIFIC MARVELS THAT WILL CATAPULT US INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM.

DESPITE ALL THIS, EVIDENCE PRESENTED HERE SUGGESTS THAT MOST OF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE PESSIMISTIC FOR OUR FUTURE.

YOU ***FEAR TOMORROW.***

THROUGHOUT THE DAY, THE SHOCK OF THIS MINDSET HAS TURNED TO DISAPPOINTMENT, AND FINALLY NOW TO ANGER...

SPECIFICALLY BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU, DR. CLARKE.

"ONE BILLION: THE OPTIMUM POPULATION OF HUMANITY," IS THE NARROW VISION OF A DYING MAN. ***PRESERVE EVERYTHING...DO*** WHATEVER IT TAKES TO ***HANG ON*** A LITTLE ***LONGER.***

IT'S THE SPEECH OF A COWARD, DOUGLAS.

THE FUTURE OF MAN IS NOT ONE BILLION OF US FIGHTING OVER LIMITED RESOURCES ON A SOON-TO-BE DEAD PLANET, BUT ONE TRILLION HUMAN BEINGS SPANNING AN ENTIRE GALAXY.

THE FUTURE OF MAN IS NOT HERE... IT IS ***OUT THERE.***

BECAUSE IT'S OUR NEW HORIZON... BECAUSE IT'S WHAT'S NEXT.

STANDING HERE TODAY, I'M FACED WITH QUESTIONS: DO I WANT TO BE MAGELLAN? DO I WANT TO BE COLUMBUS? OR COUSTEAU, OR ARMSTRONG?...

OR DO I WANT TO BE YOU?

THERE COMES A TIME WHEN EACH GENERATION HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS AND MUST BE CAST ASIDE FOR A NEW ONE...

IT IS WITH THIS UNDERSTANDING THAT I RESIGN FROM THIS BODY IMMEDIATELY.

BECAUSE THERE IS A FIRE CALLED DISCOVERY BURNING WITHIN ME...

AND I WON'T GO BACK IN THE CAVE FOR ANYONE.

THE NEXT WEEK.

IS THAT EVERYTHING?

I THINK SO.

OKAY THEN, FOLLOW ME AND I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING.

THANKS, FRIDAY!

CALL ME IF YOU NEED ME!

WILL DO!

COOL SHIP.

UH-HUH. THANKS.

DR. RICHARDS...

REED WILL DO JUST FINE, ALEX.

OKAY...REED... I LOOKED AT THE PRELIMINARY ROSTER YOU SENT TO ME AND...I'M NOT SURE HOW ELSE TO SAY THIS...

GO ON...

WELL...I'M THE DUMBEST GUY ON THE LIST.

I CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE PERSON THAT WOULD DESCRIBE YOU AS DUMB.

AND YOUR POINT IS?

FINE.

A GUY SITS DOWN AT A TABLE WITH EINSTEIN, HAWKING AND FEYNMAN AND SAYS, "HEY, I GOT A PERFECT SCORE ON THE S.A.T., HOW'D YOU GUYS DO?"

I'M WORRIED I WON'T MATTER.

YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON ON THAT LIST THAT'S BEEN TO ANOTHER WORLD. EXPERIENCE, PERSPECTIVE...THAT'S WHAT YOU BRING TO THE TABLE. IT'S INVALUABLE AND NECESSARY.

WE'RE NOT DOING CHARITY WORK, ALEX...YOU DESERVE TO BE HERE.

SO, DID YOU REALLY GET A PERFECT SCORE ON THE S.A.T.?

UH-HUH.

CONGRATULATIONS. WHEN IT'S TIME TO DRINK A LOT OF BEER AND CHASE WOMEN, THAT'LL COME IN HANDY.

I CERTAINLY HOPE SO, SIR.

THE PEAK. OLD ATLANTIS.

IT'S A HIGHLY UNUSUAL REQUEST...

BUT IT'S A TIME OF CHANGE, ISN'T IT? WE'VE MOVED BEYOND OUR NATURAL WATERS TO SWIM IN A MUCH LARGER SEA-- AN AMAZING NEW WORLD.

I FIND IT HAS MADE ME RESTLESS-- AND IT STIRS SOMETHING WITHIN ME THAT I HAVEN'T FELT IN A VERY LONG TIME.

OLD MEN CAN STILL DREAM... CAN'T THEY, SUSAN?

OF COURSE THEY CAN, MY LORD.

OF COURSE THEY *SHOULD.*

YOU WILL HAVE WHAT YOU ASKED FOR.

4 THE BAXTER BUILDING. NEW YORK CITY.

THE HUMANS HAVE SAID WE CAN LIVE HERE AS LONG AS WE WANT.

GOOD. DON'T SPOIL IT! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE, TURG.

YES! THERE'S FOOD. AND BOOKS.

KORR AND I TAUGHT OURSELVES TO READ YESTERDAY.

"MEND YOUR SPEECH A LITTLE, LEST YOU MAY MAR YOUR FORTUNES."

AND WHAT ABOUT MIK?

OH, WHILE WE WERE READING, HE DISCOVERED COMPUTING AND DELVED INTO THE BUILDING'S INFORMATION STREAM.

DID YOU KNOW THAT A CURVED AXIS RUNS FROM THE FOREVER CITY, THROUGH A PLACE CALLED OLD ATLANTIS, TO AN INHUMAN CITY-SHIP ON THE MOON?

THE RADIUS OF THAT AXIS HAPPENS TO MIRROR THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH A PORTAL TO A PLACE CALLED THE NEGATIVE ZONE OPENS.

DOES THAT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?

CONFLUENCE, TONG?

CERTAINLY. HAPPENSTANCE?

CERTAINLY NOT.

THE MAN, REED, ASKED FOR OUR HELP.

WE SHOULD ASK THE BEN IF HE APPROVES.

IF SO, THEN WE GIVE IT.

AGREED.

INTERLUDE: NU-WORLD
NU-WORLD +17 YEARS.

DR. TED CASTLE CREATES A TIME BUBBLE TO PREVENT HIM AND EVERYTHING WITHIN HIS LAB FROM BEING AFFECTED BY THE TIME-SPACE DISTORTION SURROUNDING NU-WORLD AS IT ORBITS A DYING SUN.

NU-WORLD +105 YEARS.

DR. TED CASTLE CREATES THE PROCESS BY WHICH HE GENETICALLY ENGINEERS A SYNTHETIC ALYSSA MOY (MOY-2114). (SUBSEQUENT ATTEMPTS PRODUCE AN EVER-INCREASING QUALITY IN BOTH DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING, EVENTUALLY RESULTING IN THE PERFECTED MOY-2515 IN THE PERIOD NU-WORLD +506).

NU-WORLD - REAL TIME, BEYOND THE DISTORTION.

THE ULTRON COLLECTIVE SETTLES ON AN UNINHABITED MOON RICH IN RELEVANT NATURAL RESOURCS. RAPID CONSTRUCTION AND TERRAFORMING BEGINS.

NU-WORLD +197 YEARS.

UNNATURALLY ENHANCED BY NANOTECH, SUPERHUMAN GROWTH HORMONES, AND REGENERATIVE COSMIC ENERGY, NATALIE X GAINS CONTROL OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF NU-WORLD, THEREBY ACHIEVING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY THE THOUGHT-TO-BE FICTIONAL, SOCIALIST STATE.

NU-WORLD +221 YEARS.

LORD LIGHTWAVE IS RESTLESS. AT NIGHT, HE DREAMS OF A HALCYON TOMORROW SPENT SERVING GALACTUS.

NU-WORLD +326 YEARS.

THE MUSIC PLAYS...

AND BANNER JR. GROWS OLDER.

4 THE BAXTER BUILDING

NOW LISTEN UP, GUYS.

THIS IS HOW THINGS ARE GONNA BE. I'M THE GOOD GUY, YOU'RE THE BAD GUYS, AND NOW I'M GONNA PUNCH YOUR FACES IN.

IF YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT...WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO SETTLE IT WITH...

WITH...

MORE FACE-PUNCHING...I CAN'T SAY THAT.

MAYBE... NO...

HOW ABOUT...

I...I...

LINE!

I LIKED MORE FACE-PUNCHING.

YEAH, IT'S NOT A SIGNATURE CATCHPHRASE OR ANYTHING, BUT, HEY... YOU GOT TIME, KID.

SOMETIMES IT'S BEST TO LET THESE THINGS DEVELOP NATURALLY.

NOSE-SMASHING, MAYBE?

WILL YOU PLEASE HAND ME A SCREWDRIVER, UNCLE BEN?

HERE YA GO, KID. WHAT ARE YA DOIN' ANYWAY?

I'M TRYING TO MAKE DRAGON MAN BETTER...SMARTER MAYBE...MORE USEFUL. BUT THE WAY HE'S PUT TOGETHER...HE SHOULDN'T WORK.

THERE'S A CPU, BUT NO FIRMWARE, SOFTWARE OR O.S. THAT CONNECTS TO THE HARDWARE ITSELF...REALLY, UNCLE BEN, WHOEVER DESIGNED HIM SHOULD HAVE COME UP WITH A MORE ELEGANT SOLUTION.

MAYBE IF...

YEAH, OKAY, WHATEVER...I'M GONNA WATCH THE FIGHT.

...WHATEVER YOU THINK IS BEST, FRANKLIN. POSTURING IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT'S WHAT FOLLOWS THAT MATTERS.

OKAY. WILL DO.

LISTEN... WINNER GETS CHOCOLATE.

TIME TO DIE, BUTTHEADS!

YYYAAAAAARRRRRR!

WHAT DO YOU GOT FOR ME, ARTIE?

WOOOOF!

YAAA!

KRAK!

KICK.

FACE!

THE SNACKS ARE MINE, LEECH...

AND I'M NOT GONNA SHARE!

OKAY... I THINK THAT'LL DO IT...

FWOOSH

URK! MAYBE NOT.

WHAT ARE...

YEAH, RIGHT...OF COURSE...

HOW DID I NOT SEE THAT?

THANKS, ARTIE.

WAIT A MINUTE. HOW DID YOU...?

DO MY PEN.

OH, ARTIE... DAD'S GONNA LOVE THIS.

4 P.AV.L.O.V.
METAHUMAN PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY.

IT'S THE PINCH POST-MITOSIS WHERE MOST LOSE THEIR FAITH...

SEE, IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET A GOOD COPY, IT'S CYTOKINESIS WHERE YOU NEED SOME HEAVENLY STRUCTURE.

HE SEEMS WORSE...HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN LIKE THIS?

THE WIZARD'S CONDITION HAS BEEN DETERIORATING EVER SINCE HE GOT HERE. NOW ALL HE TALKS ABOUT IS THIS--OVER AND OVER--BUILDING HUMANS AS A DIVINE CALLING. HE SAYS HE'S HAD A CONVERSION.

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME HERE, DR. RICHARDS.

ARE YOU LISTENING OUT THERE? YOU BETTER SAY YOUR PRAYERS AT THE TAIL END OF TELOPHASE OR YOU'RE DAMNED DESPITE YOUR BEST EFFORTS.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

GIVE THIS TO HIM.

BUT...

IT'S FINE, I'VE STRIPPED IT OF ANYTHING DANGEROUS.

IT'S NOT THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD THAT GOT US HERE...IT'S APOSTASY.

TAKE THIS, MR. WHITMAN.

WHAT'S THIS?

PROVIDENCE.

OH, OH... YES.

HRMMMMMMMM...

BORN AGAIN.

WELL, HELLO, REED...

SO NICE OF YOU TO DROP BY.

I SAID I WOULD COME AND SEE YOU.

AND YOU'RE A MAN OF YOUR WORD.

I SIMPLY NEVER FIGURED THAT THE CAROUSEL WOULD COME BACK AROUND SO SOON.

I NEED TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT SOMETHING, BENTLEY.

TALK? I TALKED TO GOD EVERY NIGHT FOR YOU, REED. I BEGGED FOR A MIRACLE.

DEAR LORD, PLEASE LET DR. RICHARDS SOLVE EVERYTHING AND REMAKE THE WORLD INTO A BETTER PLACE--ONE FOR ONLY THE VERY BEST OF MEN... LET HIM BE RIGHT, AND LET THE VISIONS I HAVE SEEN BE SO VERY, VERY WRONG.

SO... YOU BEING HERE NOW--YOU HAVING TIME TO COME SEE ME--IT MUST MEAN THE EARLY SUCCESS OF ANSWERED PRAYERS... OR FAILURE.

WHICH IS IT?

YEEESSSS.

WE'RE ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS, YOU AND I... WE'VE BEEN BLINDED BY BRILLIANCE, SO WE CAN FINALLY SEE THE TRUTH... GOD'S MATH IS CONSTANT AND WITHOUT VARIABLES. THE RESULTS ARE ALWAYS THE SAME.

EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BURN.

THERE WILL BE NO TOMORROW. THERE IS NOTHING TO SAVE. THIS IS...

ALL.

THERE.

IS.

:SIGH:

IT MAKES ME SAD TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS...

BUT ALL IT DOES IS MAKE ME MORE DETERMINED.

I CAME HERE TODAY TO LET YOU KNOW THAT YOUR CLONE--A YOUNGER, *UNCORRUPTED* YOU--IS LIVING WITH MY FAMILY... WITH *ME*.

I'M GOING TO PROVE SOMETHING TO YOU...AND TO THE WORLD.

THAT BOY, WHILE BEING NO DIFFERENT FROM YOU, WILL BECOME SOMETHING BETTER...

I'M GOING TO FIX YOU, BENTLEY.

I AM...

WHAT!

I!

AM!

THERE IS NO *AVOIDING* WHO WE ARE *MEANT TO BE*.

YOU'RE WRONG.

YOU SEE, I'M GOING TO OFFER HIM SOMETHING YOU'VE FORSAKEN.

BACK AT THE BAXTER BUILDING.

SO WE'LL BEGIN HERE...WITH *YOU* AND *ME.*

WITH A NEW FOCUS FOR YOUR ONGOING AND NEVER-ENDING EDUCATION.

OUR CURRICULUM WILL START AT SURVIVAL AND END AT THE EDGE OF AN ETERNAL TOMORROW.

THE RULES ARE SIMPLE...

I TEACH ONE CLASS, AND IT'S *PASS* OR *FAIL.*

WELCOME TO THE *FUTURE FOUNDATION...*

TOGETHER, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN'T DO.

THE FUTURE FOUNDATION

I'LL TAKE IT

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO:

POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPOSSIBLY AWESOME TOY EVENT EVER!

JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY, THE 30TH OF JUNE AT: 2:00PM

FOR THE UNVEILING OF THIS SEASON'S MOST ANTICIPATED TOY LINE FEATURING:

THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN

LOCATED AT: ARCADE TOYS.

4 THE BAXTER BUILDING. NEW YORK CITY.

HMMM.

BORED.

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.

BORED.

OKAY... LET'S GO.

I'M NOT SURE IF I SHOULD BE INSULTED OR EXTREMELY PROUD.

WHEN I SAID YOU COULD CHOOSE THE PARAMETERS OF THE FUTURE FOUNDATION'S FIRST GROUP PROJECT...

WELL...I ASSUMED YOU WOULD PICK SOMETHING... BROADER. A MORE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM.

NOTHING COMPARES TO THE LASER-LIKE FOCUS OF A WELL-HEELED MIND, DR. RICHARDS.

I TAKE IT YOUR REBUILT BRAIN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS IDEA, DRAGON?

ACTUALLY, IT WAS MIK, DAD.

AND ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, YOUNG MAN'?

HONOR DEMANDS WE INSIST, DR. RICHARDS.

HEY, DAD...

JUST A SECOND, FRANKLIN.

SO CAN I ASSUME YOU HAVE A NEW WAY OF ATTACKING A PROBLEM THAT I'VE PERSONALLY FAILED TO SOLVE OVER THE YEARS?

UH-HUH.

IT DEALS MOSTLY WITH REJECTING A BINARY ENDGAME. THE ON/OFF NATURE OF THE PROBLEM THAT'S TRIPPED YOU UP IN THE PAST...

I THINK WE CAN WIN AND LOSE AT THE SAME TIME, SIR.

WHAT DO--

DAD!

HOLD ON A SECOND, ALEX.

WHAT'S UP, FRANKLIN?

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE DAY AT THE TOY STORE--AND ME AND LEECH ARE READY TO GO NOW!

LISTEN, SON... I KNOW I SAID I'D TAKE YOU, BUT SOMETHING BIG'S COME UP AND--I'M SORRY--BUT I'M AFRAID I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO TODAY.

AWWW, DAD...C'MON, YOU PROMISED!

THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT, FRANKLIN. AND WHILE YOUR MOM WOULD NORMALLY FILL IN FOR ME, BECAUSE SHE'S AT THE SOUTH POLE, YOUR UNCLE JOHNNY VOLUNTEERED.

HE SAID HE'D MEET YOU IN THE LOBBY.

BUT, DAD... I REALLY WANTED YOU TO TAKE US.

I KNOW, AND I'M SORRY, FRANKLIN...BUT I CAN'T.

NOW, PICK YOUR HEAD UP, SMILE AND PROMISE ME YOU'LL HAVE A GOOD TIME. I'LL SEE YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK.

OKAY.

BYE, FRANKLIN! HAVE FUN!

YEAH...

BYE.

DOWNSTAIRS.

ALL RIGHT... YOU BOYS READY TO DO THIS?

READY.

SURE.

HEY, I KNOW THAT LOOK...

BUMMED ABOUT YOUR DAD BAILING AND YOU GUYS GETTING STUCK WITH ME?

UH-HUH.

YOU MIGHT FIND THIS HARD TO BELIEVE, FRANKLIN, BUT I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FEEL. WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, MY DAD ALWAYS SPENT MORE TIME WITH SUSAN...

THE TRUTH IS THEY JUST HAD MORE IN COMMON THAN HE AND I DID.

IT DOESN'T MEAN YOUR DAD LOVES VAL MORE THAN HE LOVES YOU...SHE'S JUST EASIER.

YOU THINK?

ABSOLUTELY. YOU AND ME, PAL, WE'RE COMPLICATED GUYS. SQUARE PEGS FOR ROUND HOLES. TROUBLEMAKERS.

WE CAUSE A RUCKUS, KID...

HEY, YOU SEE WHAT THIS IS? IT'S YOUR DAD'S GOLD CARD.

IT'S THE PERFECT WAY TO BOTH FEEL BETTER AND PUNISH HIM FOR SKIPPING OUT...SEE, WE'RE GONNA BUY EVERYTHING IN THE STORE!

OOOHHHHH!

SO TELL ME, WHAT'S FIRST ON THE SHOPPING LIST?

I HEAR THE HUMAN TORCH ACTION FIGURES ARE PRETTY CHOICE.

WEB-SHOOTERS!

REPULSORS!

I'M NEVER HAVING KIDS.

LATER.

¡IMPOSSIBLE!

ARCADE'S

¡IMPOSS

NEAT PLACE. I WONDER WHAT THEY SELL HERE?

TOYS!

HEH.

HEY, LOOK THERE, UNCLE JOHNNY!

IS THAT...

UH-HUH.

YOU TWO STAY RIGHT HERE.

ARCADE! YOU'D BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXPLANATION FOR BEING HERE.

WELL, OLD BOY, THE BUILDING DOES HAVE MY NAME ON THE FRONT OF IT.

BIG LETTERS.

YOU SHOULD PICK UP READING, IT HELPS AVOID LITTLE BOOK LEARNIN' SNAFUS LIKE THIS.

READ THIS, YOU CREEPY LITTLE--

HEY, MAN...

...LET'S ALL TRY TO RELAX AND GET ALONG.

HEEEEEEYYYY...

JOHNNY STORM, SO GLAD YOU CAME. C'MERE AND GIVE THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN SOME OF THE GOOD STUFF.

THERE IT IS.

UH-HUH. GOOD TO SEE YOU, TOO, IMPY...

MPOSS

CAN YOU FEEL THE LOVE?

OKAY. YOU CAN LET GO NOW.

NOW WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH YOU AND MY PARTNER HERE?

WHEN DID YOU START TEAMING UP WITH SUPER VILLAINS?

POP!

THAT'S NOT THE CASE AT ALL, MR. STORM. THINGS HAVE CHANGED.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS, AND MAYBE IF I WAS UP TO MY OLD HIJINKS THEY'D HAVE MERIT...

BUT I'VE TURNED OVER A NEW LEAF, AND NOW THE *ARCADE* BRAND IS SYNONYMOUS WITH HIGH-QUALITY MERCHANDISING OF LICENSED PROPERTIES.

WE'VE GOT VARIOUS DISTRIBUTION DEALS IN PLACE FOR ALL OUR SEPARATE DIVISIONS, INCLUDING BOOKS, TOYS, CLOTHING LINES AND COLLECTABLES.

AND WHAT CAN I SAY...

WE WANT TO BE IN THE *IMPOSSIBLE MAN* BUSINESS.

DETAILS?

ARCADE, INC. WILL COVER ALL MARKETING, PRODUCTION AND SHIPPING COSTS AND YOU WILL RECEIVE TWENTY PERCENT OF ALL GROSS PROFITS. ACCOUNTING IS SUBJECT TO AUDIT AND THIS IS ON TOP OF AN ANNUAL LICENSING FEE.

HONESTLY, IT'S A PERMIT TO PRINT MONEY. SO, HOW DO YOU LIKE THE IDEA OF BEING RICH AND FAMOUS?

CHING, CHING, GOOD MAN. LET'S DO THIS.

AND NOW WE'RE GETTING READY TO DEBUT MY IMPOSSIBLE MANCHANDISE.

YOU TRUST THIS GUY, IMPY?

LISTEN, I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN...IT'S A FAIR POINT. BUT I LIKE MAKING TONS OF MONEY A WHOLE LOT MORE THAN TRYING TO KILL SUPER HEROES.

I PROMISE... I'VE GIVEN UP GAMES OF MURDER. I'M DONE WITH DEATH TRAPS.

YOU BETTER BE.

I'LL BE WATCHING.

UH-HUH...IT'S ALMOST TIME, IMPOSSIBLE MAN.

YOU NEED TO GET INTO CHARACTER.

HUP. HUP.

WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK?

CREEP!

YEP. DUDE'S SHAKY, UNCLE JOHNNY.

I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.

4 A FEW MINUTES LATER.

IF I COULD HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION, PLEASE.

HELLO, HELLO, HELLO... WE AT ARCADE TOYS ARE VERY PLEASED AND EXCITED TO BE PRESENTING TO YOU--FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME *ANYWHERE*--

--OUR NEW LINE OF MERCHANDISE BASED ON, IN MY HUMBLE OPINION, ONE OF THE GREATEST SUPER HEROES IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... BOYS AND GIRLS...ESPECIALLY YOU BOYS AGES SIX TO SIXTEEN...

I PRESENT TO YOU: *IMPOSSIBLE MAN.*

GREETINGS, GOOD PEOPLE OF EARTH.

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO WITNESS A NEW GENERATION OF ACTION PRODUCTS THAT IS GOING TO REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR PLAYTIME EXPERIENCE.

WHEN WE DESIGNED AND CREATED THESE TOYS, I DONATED A SMALL BIT OF MY IMPOSSIBLENESS WHICH WAS THEN INFUSED WITHIN EACH ITEM.

POP!

SO, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU BUY THE IMPOSSIBLE FISTS WITH THE GOO-SLAPPING, SMACK-SMACKING, PEACE ENZYME.

THE LIFE-LIKE MINIATURIZED ACTION FIGURES WITH NO POINTS OF ARTICULATION IN THE FOREVER ZEN IMPOSSIPOSE.

OR THE IMPOSSIBLE PLUSHEE HEAD PILLOWS, WHICH, WHEN SQUEEZED, IMPART WISDOM IN MY NATIVE IMPOSSIBLESE.

EACH COMES WITH A SMALL PIECE OF ME WHICH WILL GO HOME WITH YOU.

THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE AT THE IMPOSSIBLE PRICE OF $19.99.

SO, GOOD CITIZENS... WHO WANTS ONE?

ME!
ME!
ME!
ME!
ME!
I DO KINDA WANT THE GIANT FISTS.
HEAD! PILLOW!
I PROMISE... I'VE GIVEN UP GAMES OF MURDER. I'M DONE WITH DEATH TRAPS.
OKAY...MAYBE A TINY LITTLE DEATH TRAP.
IMPOSSIBLE MAN, IF YOU'LL DO THE HONORS AND SIMPLY CUT THE RIBBON, WE CAN BEGIN.
POP!
SNIP.

WHHHAAAMM!

OH, GOD, THAT FELT GOOOOOOOOD.

I KNEW IT!

MORE. MORE. MORE. MORE.

MUR-DER!

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

WHIIIRRR

:MURPH:

WHAM

PILLOW!

URK!

LEECH!

URG! ARCADE... YOU'RE DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BEING IN BREACH OF CONTRACT...

I FEAR I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GET LITIGIOUS.

OH, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET THE CHANCE, OLD CHUM.

LEECH...

LEECH, WAKE UP...

THAT WASN'T VERY NICE.

HEY, MR. ARCADE...

ARCADE!

IF I WAS YOU, I'D LOOK OUT FOR THAT DINOSAUR BEHIND YOU.

IT'S A STUFFED ANIMAL. WHAT DO....

URK!

MURGLE..

UNCLE JOHNNY, BURN THE TOYS!

ON IT, FRANKLIN!

NOOOOOOOOOOO!

YOU KILLED THEM! I HEARD THEM CRYING OUT. A THOUSAND SCREAMING VOICES JUST LIKE MY OWN...

VOX POPPUPI!

END DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.

I WANT TO THANK THE ACADEMY...MY ATTORNEY...AND MY AGENT...

POP!

SO WEIRD.

AND I WANT TO THANK THESE FINE CITIZENS FOR STOPPING THE SURE SULLYING OF THE GOOD NAME *IMPOSSIBLE.*

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO ABOUT HIM?

OH, I'LL HANDLE ARCADE UNTIL THE AUTHORITIES ARRIVE.

I HOPE HE LIKES SPANKINGS.

AND IF I MAY BE SO BOLD, IF IN THE FUTURE ANY OF YOU NEED MY ASSISTANCE, OR IF EVER THERE IS A NEED FOR US TO REFORM THIS LITTLE SUPER-GROUP...

WE'RE NOT A SUPER-GROUP.

...NEVER HESITATE TO CALL.

BYE!

FAREWELL, HEROES!

THAT GUY IS...

CRAZY!

CRAZY AWESOME.

HEY, FRANKLIN...

YEAH?

DON'T THINK I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOUR DAD JUST HOW GREAT YOU WERE TODAY.

THANKS, UNCLE JOHNNY.

NOW... TELL ME. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SUPER HERO SAY?

FLAME ON!

INTERLUDE: NU-EARTH

NU-EARTH +515 YEARS

THE PERFECTED SYNTHETIC MOY-2515 ACHIEVES TOTAL AWARENESS, AND THROUGH IT, THE RETRIEVAL OF THE LONG-FORGOTTEN, LONG SINCE LOST, MEMORIES THAT BELONGED TO THE ORIGINAL ALYSSA MOY.

SHE FORGIVES TED.

NU-EARTH +648 YEARS

BELIEVING HIS IMPROVED NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEM AND SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED MOYPILOT CAN MAINTAIN THE WORLDSHIP NU-EARTH'S ORBIT AROUND THE SINGULARITY, TED CASTLE DUMPS SIX-HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF KNOWLEDGE INTO HIS BRAIN AND ESCAPES TO EARTH ALONG WITH MOY-2515.

NU-EARTH - REAL TIME, BEYOND THE DISTORTION

THE ULTRON COLLECTIVE REACHES ITS MAXIMUM POPULATION OF 10n9 AND CONCLUDES THEIR TERRAFORMING EFFORT.

PLANET ULTRON IS COMPLETE.

NU-EARTH +820 YEARS

NATALIE X EVOLVES INTO THE TOTAL COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PEOPLE OF NU-EARTH. HER BODY DIES, AND THROUGH THAT ULTIMATE SURRENDER, SHE GAINS CONTROL OF THE COMBINED POWER OF THAT COLLECTIVE.

NATALIE X BECOMES THE NU-EARTH WORLDMIND.

NU-EARTH +1003 YEARS

LORD LIGHTWAVE IS RESTLESS. AT NIGHT, HE DREAMS OF A HALCYON TOMORROW SPENT SERVING GALACTUS.

AND ALL DAY, HE LONGS FOR THE NIGHT.

NU-EARTH +1217 YEARS

AS FOR BANNER JR...

THE MUSIC STOPS...

AND THE MAESTRO TAKES THE STAGE.

THIS BETTER BE IMPORTANT, STRETCH... I WAS NAPPIN', AND YOU KNOW HOW I NEED MY BEAUTY SLEEP.

YOU'LL WANT TO SIT DOWN FOR THIS, BEN.

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

GO AHEAD, VAL.

SO, UNCLE BEN, AS YOU KNOW, DAD CREATED THIS SPECIAL CLASS FOR US AND, JUST TO SEE WHAT WE WOULD COME UP WITH, HE LET US PICK WHAT WE WANTED OUR FIRST GROUP PROJECT TO BE.

WE TALKED ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE AND CAME UP WITH SOME PRETTY COOL IDEAS...

I SUGGESTED A MASS-TO-ENERGY CONVERTER.

UH-HUH.

I THOUGHT ARTIFICIALLY-GENERATED, PERFECTFOOD WAS A PRETTY SOLID SUGGESTION.

THAT DON'T SOUND SO GOOD.

AND I STILL THINK WE SHOULD BUILD A DEATH RAY.

SHOCKIN'.

BUT IT WAS THE MOLOIDS WHO DECIDED OUR FIRST PROJECT SHOULD BE YOU.

HAIL, GRIMM! SAVIOR OF THE UNIVERSE!

MY PEOPLE.

SO, WHAT DO I GET? SUPERBOOTS? A ROBOT ASSISTANT? IF YOU GUYS COULD WHIP ME UP ONE OF THOSE SUB-ZERO PERSONAL COOLERS...

BEN...

WHAT?

WE FIGURED OUT HOW TO CURE YOU, UNCLE BEN... SORT OF.

...

I DON'T GOT TIME FOR THIS...

NO, BEN, IT'S--

REED! YOU BEEN TRYIN' FOR YEARS TO FIX ME AND NOW YOU'RE TELLIN' ME THAT A BUNCH OF KIDS OUTSMARTED THE SMARTEST MAN ON THE PLANET?

IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN'?

IT IS.

SEE, THE PROBLEM WAS THAT DR. RICHARDS HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO CURE YOU...COMPLETELY.

WHEN ALL OF YOU WERE EXPOSED TO COSMIC RADIATION, YOU WERE TRANSFORMED AT THE GENETIC LEVEL. FOREVER.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, ONE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU.

MR. FANTASTIC, THE INVISIBLE WOMAN AND THE HUMAN TORCH ALL HAVE AN OFF/ON STATE.

DON'T I KNOW IT. I'VE BEEN STUCK IN THIS--

STAY WITH US, BEN.

THE IMPORTANT POINT HERE IS THAT THE *ON* POSITION IS WHEN YOU ARE POWER-POSITIVE. THINK OF IT AS YOUR NATURAL RESTING STATE.

YOU'RE NEVER *NOT* THAT, UNCLE BEN.

AND THAT'S WHERE DAD SCREWED UP.

DR. RICHARDS ALWAYS TRIED TO MAKE YOU COMPLETELY HUMAN AGAIN. AND BECAUSE THE COSMIC RADIATION COMPLETELY CHANGED YOU INTO *"THE THING,"* THAT'S LIKE ASKING A DOG NOT TO BE A DOG, OR WOOD NOT TO BE WOOD.

IT WORKS AGAINST THE FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE OF WHO YOU ARE.

SO WE ATTACKED THE PROBLEM FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION AND CAME UP WITH THIS.

A CURE OF SORTS.

WE SHOULD CLONE HIM BEFORE HE TAKES IT.

JUST TO BE SURE.

WHEN EACH OF THE OTHERS GOES TO AN *OFF* STATE, IT ACTS AS A BLEED FOR THEIR COSMICALLY-CHARGED CELLS, CONVERTING THEM TO A PERCEIVED NORMAL HUMAN STATE.

IF YOU WOULD HAVE HAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS YEARS AGO, YOU PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CHANGE BACK AND FORTH AT WILL, OR AT LEAST SEMI-REGULARLY...

NOW, BECAUSE OF OVER-SATURATION, IT'S GOING TO BE A LOT SHORTER THAN THAT.

HOW LONG?

DEPENDS ON A LOT OF THINGS: ACTIVITY, DORMANCY, KINETIC ENERGY ABSORBED, EXPOSURE TO SUN--

HOW LONG?!

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CONTROL WHEN YOU CHANGE...

AND YOU WON'T KNOW PRECISELY WHEN YOU'LL RETURN TO YOUR *ON* STATE...

BUT WE THINK AROUND ONE WEEK A YEAR.

I'LL GET TO BE NORMAL FOR A WHOLE WEEK EVERY YEAR?

I'M SORRY IT COULDN'T BE MORE, UNCLE BEN.

I'LL TAKE IT.

WELL, ALEX...GIVE IT TO HIM.

HE'S WAITED A LONG TIME FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

CONGRATULATIONS, MR. GRIMM.

YOU GET TO BE HUMAN AGAIN.

FROM HERE WE

GO ONWARD AND BOLDLY

4 FALLING UP THROUGH TIME

SO WE HAVE A DEAL?

YOU DON'T WISH IT ANY MORE THAN I DO.

HERE, I CAN BUILD.

UHHHHH.

WELL... SUCCESS?

REST...AND REMEMBER WHAT YOU ARE.

UH-HUH.

I'M NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT YOU.

YEAH, I KNOW. I TOOK CARE OF THAT TOO.

ALL HOPE LIES IN DOOM.

YOU'D BETTER BE SURE.

BECAUSE WE'RE NOT REALLY LEAVING OURSELVES ANY--

VALERIA...

...FRANKLIN'S PLAYED HIS PART. SUCCESS OR FAILURE, WE'RE COMMITTED NOW. FROM HERE WE GO ONWARD, AND **BOLDLY.**

FEAR AND DOUBT ARE FOR OTHERS, MY CHILDREN...NOT RICHARDSES.

AND HOW'D YOU GET SO SMART, GRANDFATHER?

IT SEEMS TO RUN IN THE FAMILY.

QUICKLY NOW. TIME WORKS AGAINST US.

YOU REMEMBER WHAT TO SAY, DON'T YOU, DEAR? WE CHOSE THE WORDS CAREFULLY.

I DON'T WANT YOU WORRYING ABOUT ME. WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF.

MY GOALS HERE ARE PERIPHERAL, CHILD. SECONDARY AT BEST.

NO. YOU'RE WRONG...

WHILE WE'RE FIXING THE PAST, I THINK YOU JUST MIGHT FIX THE FUTURE.

GOODBYE, GRANDFATHER.

FRANKLIN... WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?

WHILE THE TWO OF YOU ARE GONE, I'M GOING TO TRY AND BUILD A SELF-SUSTAINING POCKET REALITY HERE, AS A PLATFORM FOR WHEN WE'RE DONE...AN ESCAPE HATCH.

THIS IS NOT HOW YOU SHOULD BE SPENDING YOUR TIME, SON.

IT'S NOT YOUR DECISION TO MAKE, OLD MAN...

BESIDES, WE HAVE TO BE WILLING TO TRY, RIGHT?

FRANKLIN, IF I FAIL...

I BELIEVE YOU WON'T.

NOW GO.

STATE UNIVERSITY. YEARS AGO.

GOOD MORNING, GOOD MORNING...AS YOU CAN SEE, I HAVE WRITTEN SOMETHING ON THE BOARD:

"WHAT IS...'RIGHT DOING'?"

THIS QUESTION--WHICH WE WILL ANSWER, ALONG WITH MANY, MANY OTHERS--WILL BE THE FOCUS OF THIS SEMESTER'S STUDIES.

SO, I AM PROFESSOR BRANDT, AND WELCOME TO MORAL PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS 201.

ARE THERE ANY BRAVE SOULS OUT THERE WHO WISH TO VENTURE AN ANSWER?

WHAT IS RIGHT, SIR, IS AN ACTION THAT SERVES THE BEST INTEREST WITHIN SOMEONE'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

STARTING WITH BEING TRUE TO ONESELF, AND PROGRESSIVELY EXPANDING OUTWARD.

SEQUENTIALLY ASKING, IS THIS BEST FOR MY FAMILY, THEN IS IT BEST FOR MY FRIENDS, THEN FOR MY COMMUNITY, UNTIL ARRIVING AT... IS THIS BEST FOR ALL MANKIND?

AH, EXCELLENT...

MR. RICHARDS OFFERS US AN EXTRAPOLATION OF 'THE TRUE IS THE WHOLE.'

PARAPHRASING HEGEL IS... *ACCEPTABLE* IN THIS CLASS.

ACCEPTABLE, BUT INFERIOR.

EXCUSE ME?

IT'S A FLAWED PHILOSOPHY DEPENDENT ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT ALL INDIVIDUALS MERIT EQUALITY. IT'S FOOLISHNESS, REALLY.

THE ONLY "RIGHT ACTION" IS THE ONE THE PROMOTES SURVIVAL...EVOLUTION... *ASCENDANCE.*

THAT'S A SURPRISING POSITION IN THIS DAY AND AGE, MR. VON DOOM

ACTUALLY, PROFESSOR, IT'S ARROGANT AND THE ANSWER OF AN ARISTOCRAT...SO IT'S NOT SURPRISING AT ALL.

YOU THINK YOU'RE BETTER THAN EVERYONE, DON'T YOU, VICTOR?

IN HERE?

ABSOLUTELY.

HEY, BEN.

HIYA, EGGHEAD. HOW WAS CLASS?

OH, VICTOR WAS IN RARE FORM, AS USUAL.

LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR ME TO TAKE THAT GUY DOWN A PEG OR TWO.

SO...THE WEEKEND. WHADDYA GOT PLANNED?

I DUNNO... MAYBE THE LAB. I'VE GOT A COUPLE NEW IDEAS I WANT TO...

STOP RIGHT THERE! YOU ARE NOT SPENDIN' ANOTHER WEEKEND IN THAT BUILDIN'.

LISTEN, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT BLESSED WITH A HANDSOME MUG LIKE MINE, BUT...

I KNOW SOME *GIRLS*... THERE ARE GONNA BE SOME *PARTIES*...

IT COULD BE...

WHOA!

OH!

...

DAD?

HELLO, REED.

DAD!

OH GOD, DAD...IT'S BEEN...

I KNOW, I KNOW...LET ME GET A LOOK AT YOU.

MY GOODNESS... YOU'RE ALL GROWN, A MAN NOW.

YEAH, WELL...

I DUNNO... MAN KINDA IMPLIES CHEST HAIR, DON'T IT?

OH, YEAH... DAD, THIS IS MY BEST FRIEND, BEN GRIMM.

HI, MR. RICHARDS.

A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, BEN.

IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKIN'...

...WHAT'S WITH THE SUIT?

AND NOT THAT THIS IS A BAD THING, DAD, YOU LOOK GREAT...

BUT IT'S AS IF YOU HAVEN'T AGED A DAY.

THAT'S BECAUSE I HAVEN'T, SON.

WHAT?

I'M HERE FOR A REASON, REED.

SOMETHING HAPPENED...

"THERE WAS AN... EVENT.

"WHEN I LEFT HOME...WHEN I LEFT YOU... IT WAS TO DO SOME VERY IMPORTANT WORK...SOME VERY DANGEROUS WORK.

"THIS WORK LED ME TO TRYING TO STOP A MAN WHO HAD A MECHANICAL ENGINE INSIDE HIM--A QUANTUM POWER SOURCE. WE FOUGHT AND THE DEVICE WAS DAMAGED...AND I TRIED TO STOP IT FROM BLOWING UP.

"I FAILED, AND WHEN HE DETONATED THERE WERE UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES...

"BECAUSE I WAS TOUCHING THE DEVICE WHEN IT EXPLODED, I BECAME THE CONDUIT FOR THE ENERGY THAT WAS RELEASED. IT CHANGED THE WAY I AGE...I BECAME VERY LONG-LIVED, POSSIBLY EVEN IMMORTAL. THIS IS WHY I APPEAR THE SAME AGE I WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU.

"I ALSO GAINED A TENUOUS CONTROL OF TIME ITSELF. WITH MUCH EFFORT, I HAVE LEARNED TO HARNESS THIS ABILITY AND CAN MOVE FROM ONE ERA TO THE NEXT...JUMPING THROUGH TIME. WHICH IS HOW I AM HERE TODAY.

"BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE WAS THAT EVERY NATHANIEL--EVERY ME--THAT HAS EVER EXISTED IN ANY REALITY WAS PULLED INTO THIS ONE.

"THE EXPLOSION THREW US THROUGH TIME...

"AND WE EVENTUALLY LANDED SOME SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS IN THE FUTURE.

"IN THIS TIME, THE EARTH IS SUPERVISED BY A BEING CALLED *IMMORTUS*.

"EMPOWERED BY THE TIME VARIANCE AUTHORITY AND THEIR ENFORCEMENT ARM, ***THE AUDITORS***, IT IS HIS ROLE TO POLICE ALL OF SPACE-TIME AND *'HANDLE'* ANY ABERRATIONS OR EVENTS THAT COULD POTENTIALLY RISK THE SANCTITY OF T.I.M.E.

"THE COLLAPSE INTO A SINGLE TIME-STREAM OF ALL AN INDIVIDUAL'S PARALLEL SELVES--EACH WITH THE POWER TO NAVIGATE THROUGH TIME--REPRESENTED PRECISELY THIS KIND OF THREAT.

"AND AS SUCH, HE ORDERED ALL OF US TO BE DESTROYED.

"AS WE PREPARED TO FIGHT FOR OUR LIVES, THE CRUEL AND CUNNING NATURE OF IMMORTUS BECAME APPARENT.

"HE OFFERED US A DEAL--HE CALLED IT COMPROMISE--WHICH WOULD ALLOW ONE OF US TO LIVE, BUT WE MUST CHOOSE AMONGST OURSELVES WHO IT WOULD BE...

"THUS BEGAN THE SYSTEMATIC SUICIDE/MURDER OF EVERY ONE OF ME THAT HAS EVER EXISTED.

"THE GREAT HUNT."

AND NOW ONLY TWO REMAIN.

I HAVE SPENT YEARS RUNNING. REFUSING TO TAKE PART WHILE MY OTHER SELVES METHODICALLY HUNTED EACH OTHER DOWN...

BUT THE TIME FOR RUNNING HAS COME TO AN END--AND THERE IS NO ESCAPING THIS.

SO, BEFORE I HAVE TO FACE IT... I WANTED TO COME SEE YOU.

WELL, IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO JUST LOSE YOU AGAIN YOU'RE CRAZY...

NO! DAD, YOU'RE CRAZY IF YOU THINK I'M JUST GOING TO LET YOU DO THIS WITHOUT TRYING TO HELP.

REED, IF I WOULD HAVE WANTED THAT, I WOULD HAVE VISITED YOU LATER IN YOUR LIFE. IT'S NOT A TEMPTATION I CARED TO FACE.

BESIDES... I THINK I KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP.

I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOU SAY IT AGAIN.

FINE. MY TIME-TRAVELING FATHER NEEDS US TO HELP HIM FIGHT HIMSELF FAR IN THE FUTURE, AND, IF WE ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO HELP HIM, WE NEED SOME OF THE WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY YOU'VE BEEN DEVELOPING.

IN SECRET.

THAT I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW ABOUT.

BUT DO.

NO. NOT THAT...THE OTHER.

HUMILITY SUITS YOU, RICHARDS.

AND, IF NOT FOR YOUR FATHER'S CLEARLY ATEMPORAL SUIT, I WOULD EITHER CALL YOU A LIAR... OR ACCUSE YOU OF PARTAKING IN THE FOOLISH RITUAL FRATERNIZING THAT IS ALL TOO COMMON HERE AT THIS "INSTITUTION" OF "HIGHER LEARNING."

PLEASE.

SO YOU WILL HELP?

SAY IT AGAIN.

4 LATER.

OKAY, I THINK WE'RE READY. YOU FIRST, GRIMM.

THIS IS A POWER SUIT/ENHANCED EXOSKELETON.

IT'S PERFECTLY SUITED FOR YOU BECAUSE IT REQUIRES NO TACTICAL ACUMEN OR SOPHISTICATED CALCULATIONS/CORRECTIONS WHILE BEING USED. JUST RUN, JUMP, PUNCH, AND KICK...

I THINK YOU CAN MANAGE THAT.

I KNOW BEIN' A JERK COMES NATURALLY, VICTOR, BUT I'M GONNA IGNORE IT 'CAUSE THIS IS JUST... INSANELY GREAT.

HERE, THIS IS FOR YOU.

ARE YOU SURE EVERYTHING FEELS RIGHT, BEN? SPEAK UP IF ANYTHING SEEMS WRONG.

NOPE, EVERYTHING IS PERFECT. I'M GONNA BEAT YOUR OTHER DADDY INTO A PULP.

I COULD GET USED TO THIS.

VICTOR...

HOW DID YOU GET A HOLD OF A NUCLEAR POWER SOURCE?

DID YOU STEAL THIS?

LAST FALL, I LUNCHED WITH OPPENHEIMER AND PEELED HIS MIND LIKE A PRAWN.

BY THE TIME WE HAD DESSERT, HE HAD REVEALED EVERY LITTLE SECRET HIDDEN IN HIS SMALL, SIMPLE MIND.

HOW DID...

WITH A PROTOTYPE OF THIS. HOWEVER, WITH THE NEWER VERSION, I NOT ONLY CAN READ MINDS, BUT I CAN DOMINATE THEIR WILL... CONTROLLING AND BENDING THEM TO MY EVERY WHIM...

...AS ONE DAY I WILL DO TO ALL MEN.

TIME TO GO.

THE BAXTER BUILDING. TODAY.

TIMEQUAKE. CONDITION: RED.

HELLO.

WHO ARE--

HOLD THAT THOUGHT.

PRIVACY FIRST.

WHO ARE YOU, AND WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WE NEED TO TALK.

KHAN!

URK--

SO TALK.

OKAY...

BUT IF YOU DON'T MIND-- *MOM*--DO YOU THINK I COULD HAVE SOME OF THAT TEA YOU'RE MAKING FIRST?

OH MY GOD...

VAL?

WE'RE HERE.

THIS PORTAL WILL STAY OPEN FOR TEN MINUTES. IF I DECIDE THINGS ARE TOO ***DANGEROUS***...IF I TELL YOU TO ***LEAVE***, YOU THREE BOYS ARE TO RETURN HERE IMMEDIATELY AND JUMP BACK...

DO WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER?

YES, DAD.

OKAY... WE'RE GOING THIS WAY.

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

THIS IS COLLAPSED CHRONOPOLIS.

ONE VERSION OF ME SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME GATHERING ARTIFACTS FROM VARIOUS TIME PERIODS.

HE CONSIDERED HIMSELF A COLLECTOR, A CURATOR OF THE HISTORY OF MAN.

FASCINATING IN THEORY, BUT IN ACTUALITY IT'S QUITE--

CREEPY. THE WORD YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS CREEPY.

WHO WAS HE...AND OH MY GOD... WHAT IS THAT?

HE WAS A MADMAN...AND THAT IS WHERE HE LIVED...

THE FORTRESS.

OKAY, I CAN FEEL HIM NEARBY... AT THIS PROXIMITY, WE PULL TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER.

EVERYONE BE CAREFUL.

HEY...

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, STAY CLOSE TO ME.

I'VE GOT YOUR BACK, OKAY?

SAME HERE, BEN.

THE TWO OF YOU BE QUIET, I'M TRYING TO...

OH! HE'S HERE.

INDEED I AM.

AND NOW... LET THE GREAT HUNT COME TO A CLOSE.

EVERY BOY DESERVES A FATHER

THE GREAT HUNT.

AFTER THE EVENT, WHEN ALL THE NATHANIEL RICHARDSES IN THE MULTIVERSE COLLAPSED INTO A SINGLE TIMELINE, ONLY ONE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN.

WITHIN THE GATHERING, THERE WAS A BEAST--A RABID, SNARLING ANIMAL--THAT PURSUED THE OTHERS TO EXTINCTION.

ALWAYS HUNTING, ALWAYS TAKING WHAT MADE THEM STRONG...

OVER TIME, NUMBERS DWINDLED FROM TENS OF THOUSANDS, TO NOW...AND THE FINAL TWO.

THE FORTRESS.

WELL?

TO THE VERY END.

TO THE DEATH.

I GOT THIS.

WHAM!

ZZZZZZAK!

I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU...

SOMETHING I TOOK FROM ANOTHER ONE OF US...

SOMETHING TO EVEN UP THE ODDS.

THE ANACHRONAUTS.

THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK...

REED!

SAVE YOURSELVES... YOU AND THE OTHER BOYS GET AWAY FROM HERE!

NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, DAD...

ZZZAM!!

WE CAN HANDLE THIS...

REED!

BEN--!

GET THESE GUYS OFFA ME!

YES. THIS IS IT. THE VERY END.

SAY FAREWELL...

AARGH!

WHAT?!

I CAN'T MOVE...

WHO...?

OH, IT IS I...

VICTOR VON DOOM.

EVEN IMMORTALS TREMBLE AT THE NAME.

TIME TO KNEEL, OLD MAN.

NO.

NO!

WHAM!

BEN... THEY NEED OUR HELP. NOW!

JUST A SECOND...

SMASH!

OKAY...NOW LET'S GO BEAT UP YOUR BAD DADDY.

AGGGHH!

WHAM!

BEN!

NO!

AAIIEEEE!

STOP.

PLEASE STOP...

OH GOD, SON, IT HURTS...

...PLEASE, MAKE IT STOP. HELP ME.

OH NO...

I...

I...

FOOL.
UHHHH.
NOW... WHERE WERE WE?
OH, YES... THE END. WOULD YOU LIKE TO BEG FOR YOUR LIFE?
YOU HAVE SO MANY, MANY TIMES BEFORE.
GO TO HELL.

YOU FIRST.

BOLD TALK FROM A ONE-ARMED MAN.

BOLD TALK FOR *ANY* MAN FACING *DOOM.*

GET UP, NATHANIEL.

THANK YOU, VICTOR.

WHAT ARE YOU THANKING HIM FOR?

:KAFF!:

FOR PROVING THAT BY YOURSELF YOU COULD NOT BEST ME?

FOR PROVING THAT I AM WORTHY AND YOU ARE NOT?

HERE. FINISH HIM.

WIN...IT'S WHAT WE CAME HERE TO DO.

I CAN'T. I...

I'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE. STANDING HERE, EVEN KNOWING THAT HE'D KILL ME WITHOUT THINKING TWICE ABOUT IT...

I CAN'T DO IT. I'M NOT A MURDERER.

BUT YOU KNOW THIS HAS TO END?

...

DO WHAT IT IS YOU DO, VICTOR.

NOW WE CAN LEAVE THIS PLACE...

BUT I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER, RICHARDS.

REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

REMEMBER WHO SAVED YOU... REMEMBER WHO SET YOU FREE.

REMEMBER *DOOM*.

WHAMMM!

STATE UNIVERSITY, THE PAST. SHORTLY.

WELL, HOW IS HE?

A COUPLE OF CRACKED RIBS. HE'LL BE OKAY...

BEN'S MADE OF PRETTY STERN STUFF.

IF YOU ONLY KNEW...

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO SAVE ME, SON.

WHY ARE... OH MY GOD... YOU'RE LEAVING AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?

I HAVE A... *COMMITMENT* I HAVE TO KEEP.

I DON'T WANT YOU TO GO.

I KNOW...

BUT ALL OF THIS IS OVER, RIGHT...? YOU WON. YOU'RE BACK NOW...

...AND I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN SOON.

I HOPE SO, REED.

THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE.

4 THE BAXTER BUILDING. THE PRESENT.

MMMM, THAT'S GOOD. JUST HOW I REMEMBER IT.

SO I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE THAT THE INTRUDER WE HAD A COUPLE WEEKS AGO WAS YOUR BROTHER... A TIME-TRAVELING FRANKLIN FROM THE FUTURE.

UH-HUH.

WHY, VAL?

WHY WHAT?

WHY DID BOTH OF YOU COME BACK?

WELL, MOTHER, YOUR BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY AND I DECIDED THAT WE WEREN'T HAPPY WITH HOW THINGS TURNED OUT.

FRANKLIN CAME BACK TO PREPARE OUR YOUNGER SELVES FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN...EQUIPPING THEM FOR THE COMING DAYS.

AND WHY ARE *YOU* HERE?

COLLAPSING SPACE-TIME.

SUCCESS, I ASSUME?

YES. I'M THE ONLY NATHANIEL RICHARDS THAT'S LEFT.

PERFECT.

WHAT?!!

THAT IS GOING TO BE ONE SERIOUSLY INSANE DROP.

FRANKLIN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?!

IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU DIDN'T VIEW ME AS THE BEARER OF BAD NEWS.

WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ISN'T SUBJECTIVE, MOTHER... IT'S NOT A POTENTIAL COURSE OF ACTION-- IT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, THERE IS *NOTHING* YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE IT... SO IT'S CRUCIAL THAT YOU GET PAST DENIAL AND FOCUS ON LISTENING.

WILL YOU TRY TO DO THAT FOR ME?

YES.

WHAT DID YOU DO? I CAN'T ACCESS MY POWERS. I CAN'T *MOVE* THROUGH TIME.

REALITY IS WHAT I MAKE IT, GRANDFATHER. AND RIGHT NOW, I DON'T WANT YOU JUMPING AROUND...SO I'M DENYING YOUR ABILITY TO USE THE PART OF YOUR BRAIN THAT CONTROLS YOUR POWERS.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT WAS GAINED TODAY.

VAL AND I WOULD RATHER IT NOT BE WASTED.

AFTER THE *LAST WAR*, WHEN ALL REALITY HAS COLLAPSED INTO A SINGLE TIMESTREAM AND THE HEAT DEATH OF EVERYTHING IS IMMINENT... THERE IS A WHITE SPACE WHERE YOUR SON SITS WAITING FOR THE NEW FUTURE WE HAVE CREATED TO OVERTAKE HIM.

THERE--POST-COLLAPSE--HE ACTS AS AN ANCHOR FOR THE CHANGES HE HAS MADE, AND WHEN I RETURN TO HIM I WILL SERVE THAT VERY SAME FUNCTION REGARDING MINE.

WE CEMENT THIS NEW FUTURE WE HAVE CREATED WITH SACRIFICE...

MOTHER, FRANKLIN AND I WILL DIE DOING THIS.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS LET GO...DROP, AND I'LL TURN YOUR POWERS BACK ON... THEN YOU NEED TO JUMP AWAY, BACK TO THE NEW PAST BEFORE THE REVISION WAVE HITS.

IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY...IF I DON'T JUMP FROM A FIXED POINT--AND WHILE FALLING TOWARDS THE WAVE--THERE'S NO TELLING WHERE I'LL END UP.

I'LL BE LOST IN TIME.

I KNOW YOU'LL FIND YOUR WAY...

...AND WE'RE NOT ARGUING ABOUT THIS.

CRACK!

FRANKLIN! STOP!

LISTEN TO ME... *LISTEN*...I'M NOW EVERY NATHANIEL RICHARDS THAT EVER WAS. IT'S PROBABLE THAT I CAN'T BE ERASED FROM SPACE-TIME... EVEN IF I STAY I COULD SURVIVE THE REVISION WAVE.

THERE'S NO GUARANTEE OF THAT...WE BOTH KNOW IT.

DAMMIT, CHILD! I WANT TO BE HERE... WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO TAKE THAT CHOICE AWAY FROM ME?

NO...NO... I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS...

I WON'T... I...

MOM!

WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME AND YOU HAVE TO FOCUS.

THERE ARE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW... THERE ARE...

WAIT!

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING WILL EVEN WORK?

YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER, THINKING YOU CAN SOLVE EVERYTHING.

ACTUALLY, NO.

MOM, I'M PROBABLY ONE OF THE SMARTEST PEOPLE THAT HAS EVER LIVED, BUT THIS WASN'T MY IDEA AT ALL...IT WAS FRANKLIN'S.

HE'S THE ONE THAT FIGURED IT OUT.

IT'S DAD.

SEE, WHEN YOU COLLAPSED EVERY YOU INTO OUR REALITY...

WHEN IMMORTUS COMMANDED THE GREAT HUNT AND THE CULLING OF ALL THE NATHANIEL RICHARDSES-- AND EVEN THOUGH YOU DIDN'T MEAN FOR IT TO HAPPEN...

YOU MADE EVERY REED RICHARDS THAT'S EVER EXISTED INTO AN ORPHAN.

IT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM, IT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH ALL OF THEM...

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND...

EVERY BOY DESERVES A FATHER.

ESPECIALLY MINE.

I LOVE YOU, GRANDPA.

KRAKK

TIME'S ALMOST UP.

DON'T GO YET. YOU DON'T HAVE TO...I DON'T WANT YOU TO DO WHAT YOU'RE DOING.

IT'S ALREADY DONE.

AND NOW FOR KNOWLEDGE...

THE COMING DAYS ARE GOING TO BE DARK...

DARK AND FULL OF LOSS. IT WILL FEEL LIKE EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BREAK APART...THAT IT WILL SHATTER AND EVERYTHING WILL END.

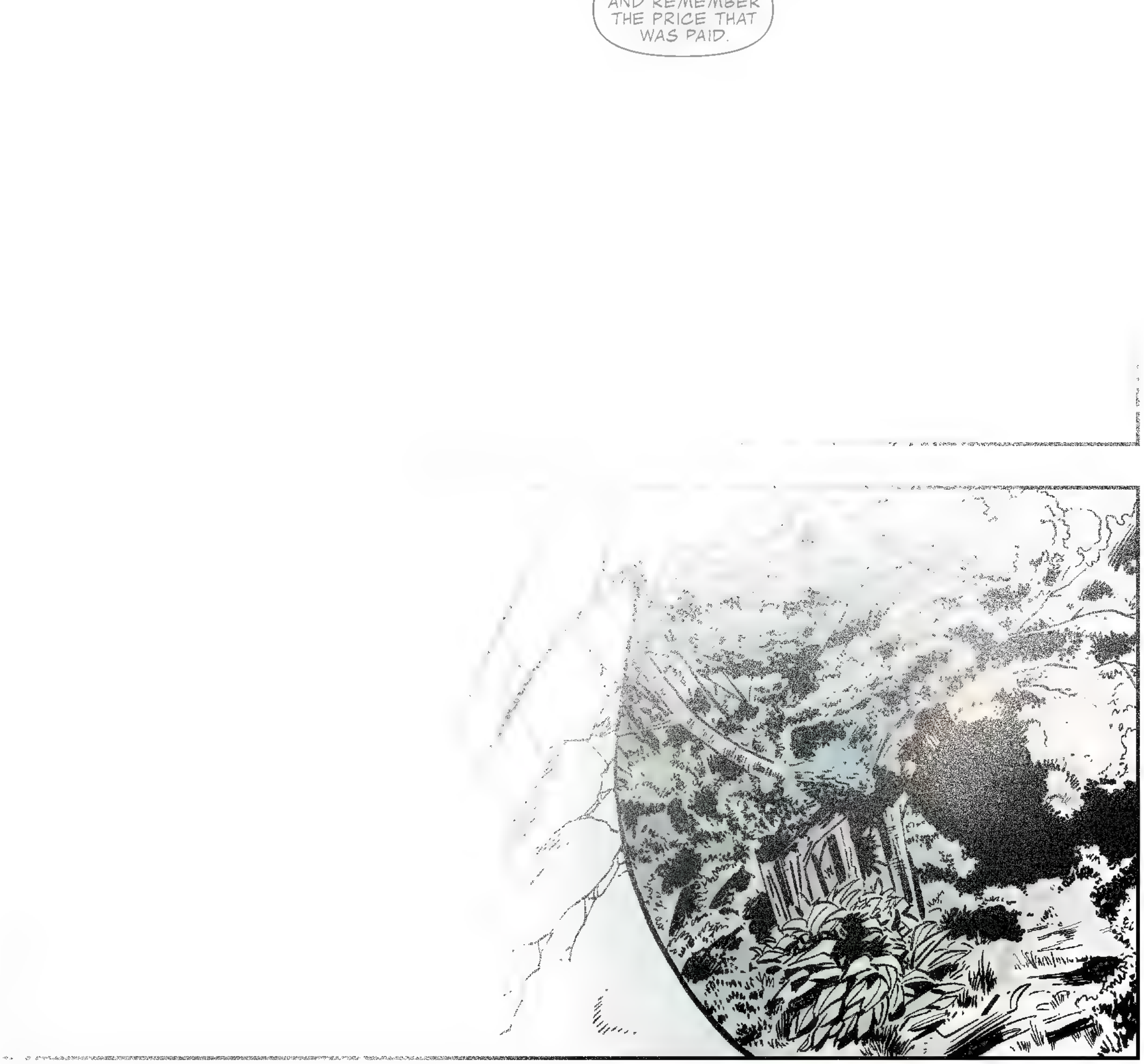
ONLY *YOU* CAN HOLD US TOGETHER.

CAN YOU BE STRONG, MOTHER?

STRONGER THAN YOU'VE EVER BEEN BEFORE?
THERE WILL BE A MOMENT WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO GIVE UP. YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO LET GO...

WHEN YOU REACH THAT POINT, LOOK INTO THE SKY.

LOOK UP... AND REMEMBER THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID.



UHHHH!

FRANKLIN...

THE PRESSURE IS COLLAPSING THE POCKET AND THE NEW FUTURE IS STILL TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AWAY...

THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK.

YOU TRIED YOUR BEST.

GRANDFATHER?

HE WON.

HOW DID YOU CONVINCE HIM TO GO?

I KICKED HIM IN THE FACE.

HA! I CAN'T BELIEVE I MISSED THAT.

LISTEN, I'VE BEEN PLAYING AROUND WITH THE MATH IN MY HEAD. HYPOTHETICALLY, SHOULD YOU BE ABLE TO TUNNEL...

YEAH, I THOUGHT OF THAT, TOO. BUT THE NATURE OF MY POWERS WORKS AGAINST US...

ROCK AND A HARD PLACE.

THERE'S NO WAY WE'LL MAKE IT.

WE'RE DEAD EITHER WAY... WE HAVE TO TRY, DON'T WE?

YES, WE DO.

HERE IT COMES.

WELL... MINE'S STILL THE HUMAN TORCH.

FOLLOW ME... WE'RE GONNA JUMP RIGHT INTO IT. LIKE DUCKING UNDER A WAVE...

HEY...JUST SO YOU KNOW...

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN MY FAVORITE HERO.

HERE WE GO....

READY...

JUMP!

SOMEONE'S GOING TO HAVE TO STAY BEHIND

FANTASTIC FOUR

VOL FOUR THREE

SO
WE HAVE A
DEAL

4 THE NEUTRAL ZONE

BETWEEN UNITED STATES TERRITORY AND THAT CLAIMED BY THE FOREVER CITY OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY.

I THINK WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE FOR DINNER.

4 THE BAXTER BUILDING.

HRMPH.

REALLY, DAD...? I WOULDN'T ACTUALLY CALL THIS SECURITY...

I'VE GOT TO UPGRADE ALL OF THIS OR I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO SLEEP AT NIGHT.

ALL RIGHT...

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE HIDING IN HERE.

OOOFFF!

WHA...

ANALYZING RNA SEQUENCING | SCANNING RICHARDS [[PRIORITY: 4]] DATABASE | MATCHING...

MATCHING...

ACCEPTED. POWERING ON.

OKAY. THAT'S MORE LIKE IT, DAD.

GOOD THING THAT...

WHOA.

WORKLOG: INITIALIZED.

SEARCH STRING--QUERY?

TELL ME ABOUT IT.

AUGUST 8: I HAVE REBUILT **THE BRIDGE** IN THE HOPES OF FINDING A WAY TO SUCCEED IN WHAT I FEEL IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM FACING THE FUTURE OF MY WORK, AND POSSIBLY THE HUMAN RACE ITSELF.

HOW DO YOU PLAN FOR ALL CONTINGENCIES... HOW DO YOU GUARANTEE THE AVOIDANCE OF GLOBAL CALAMITY WHILE ENSURING SOCIETAL EVOLUTION?

IN SHORT: HOW DO YOU **SOLVE EVERYTHING?**

AUGUST 12: SUCCESS. I HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH A PAN-DIMENSIONAL GROUP CALLED THE **COUNCIL**. COMPRISED ENTIRELY OF VERSIONS OF MYSELF FROM PARALLEL REALITIES...ALL COMMITTED TO THE SAME SINGULAR GOAL.

THEY HAVE ASKED ME TO JOIN THEM. I REMAIN... UNDECIDED.

AUGUST 23: FAILURE. THE COUNCIL HAS... FALLEN.

THINGS WERE **NOT AS I THOUGHT THEM TO BE**. WHILE THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS, ESPECIALLY THE AGRICUL--

STOP.

DEFINE, 'NOT AS I THOUGHT THEM TO BE.'

THE COUNCIL IS COMPRISED OF VARIOUS REEDS OF DIVERSE POWER SETS AND NATURAL ABILITIES. UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS, WHO ONLY SHARE TWO TRAITS BEYOND WHO THEY ARE:

ONE: A UNIFORM DESIRE TO **SOLVE EVERYTHING.**

AND TWO: ABANDONING ALL ELSE--INCLUDING THEIR FAMILIES--IN PURSUIT OF THIS GOAL...THE **GREATER GOOD.**

I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO SUSAN WHEN SHE TOLD ME NEVER TO REBUILD THIS MACHINE.

OH, DAD... MOM IS GONNA KILL YOU.

LATVERIA.

THERE IS NO OTHER MOVE TO BE MADE...

SUMMON KRISTOFF VERNARD FROM EXILE.

MY LORD, SURELY YOU CAN STILL...

NO.

I HAVE PRIDE, BORIS...BUT MORE THAN THAT, I CANNOT TOLERATE WEAKNESS.

I WILL ABDICATE MY THRONE AND FIND A WAY TO RECLAIM WHAT I HAVE LOST.

DOOM MUST BE... *REBORN.*

AS YOU--

BEEEEE-OOOOOP

MY LORD! PARTICLE ACCELERATION AND ASSEMBLY IMMINENT!

SOMEONE IS TRANSLOCATING INTO THE ROOM.

HHHMMMMM

WHAT'S UP?

YOUNG LADY...

SHOWING UP UNANNOUNCED IS RASH, UNSUITABLE BEHAVIOR...EVEN FOR A CHILD.

DOES YOUR FATHER KNOW WHERE YOU ARE, VALERIA?

ACTUALLY, HE'S WHY I'M HERE.

AND WHAT HAS HE DONE NOW?

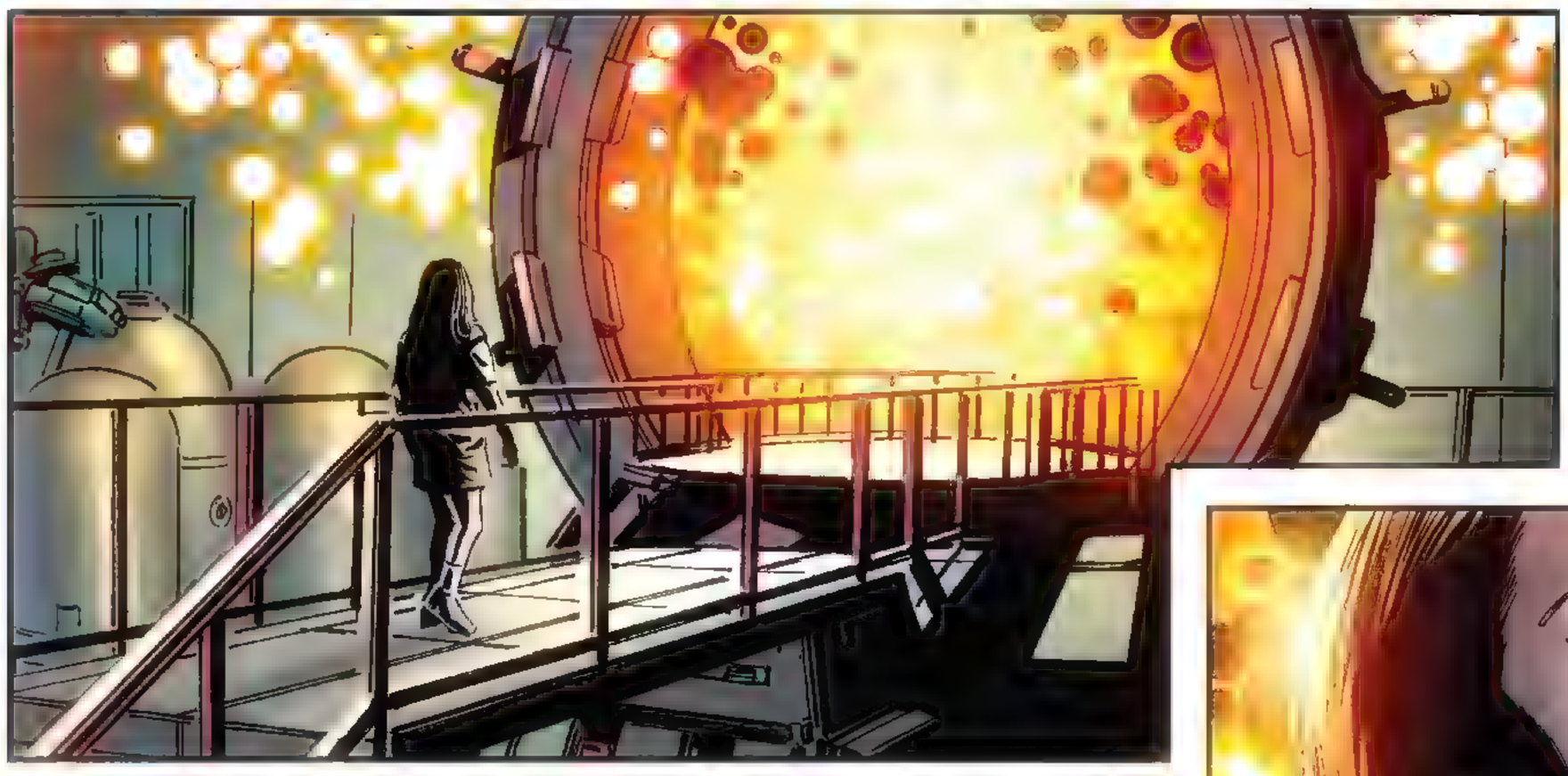
DADDY WENT AND BUILT A VERY BAD MACHINE AND FORGOT TO TELL ANYONE...

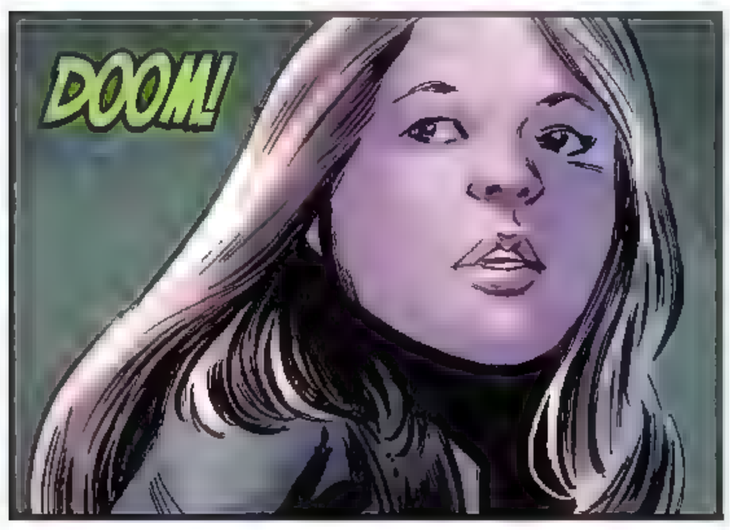
GUESS WHO JUST FOUND IT.

AND WHAT DID YOU DECIDE WAS THE PROPER COURSE OF ACTION UPON MAKING SUCH A DISCOVERY?

I ASKED MYSELF...

"WHAT WOULD UNCLE DOOM DO?"




DOOM!

DOOM!
DOOM!
DOOM!
DOOM!
DOOM!

DOO--

!

?

"AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN WHEN YOU STEPPED THROUGH THE MACHINE?"

THAT MY FATHER MADE THE WRONG CHOICE.

WHEN HAVING TO DECIDE BETWEEN *PERSONAL HAPPINESS* AND THE *GOOD OF THE WORLD*, HOW COULD HE RATIONALIZE SUCH A SELFISH DECISION?

THIS DAY, I AM...THE *WRONG MAN* TO ASK SUCH QUESTIONS.

WHY DID YOU COME HERE, CHILD?

ALL HOPE LIES IN DOOM.

EXCUSE ME?

I CAME BECAUSE...

MY FATHER IS GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP.

SUE! LOOK OUT!

I'VE GOT IT, REED.

WORRY ABOUT BEN.

WHAM!

I'm fine...

I just cracked my faceplate which means I'm suckin' in that weird devolvin' radiation the city gives off.

I guess I'll change back in an hour or so when we get outta this place.

ACTUALLY, BEN...

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT PROLONGED EXPOSURE WILL DO.

WHAT DO YOU SEE, JOHNNY?

IT LOOKS LIKE WHAT YOU THOUGHT, REED...

THEY'VE EXPANDED THE EVOLUTIONARY ENGINE THAT CONTROLS THE CITY.

AND IT APPEARS TO BE REACHING CRITICAL MASS.

WHICH COULD POTENTIALLY CAUSE A CASCADING EVOLUTIONARY EFFECT FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES.

NO TIME FOR SUBTLETY THEN...

SUSAN, CAN YOU PROJECT A FORCE-FIELD THAT WILL ENVELOP THE CITY?

I'LL TRY...

OOOFFF.

HURRY, I WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD THIS LONG.

JOHNNY, GO NOVA--BURN OFF ALL THE OXYGEN.

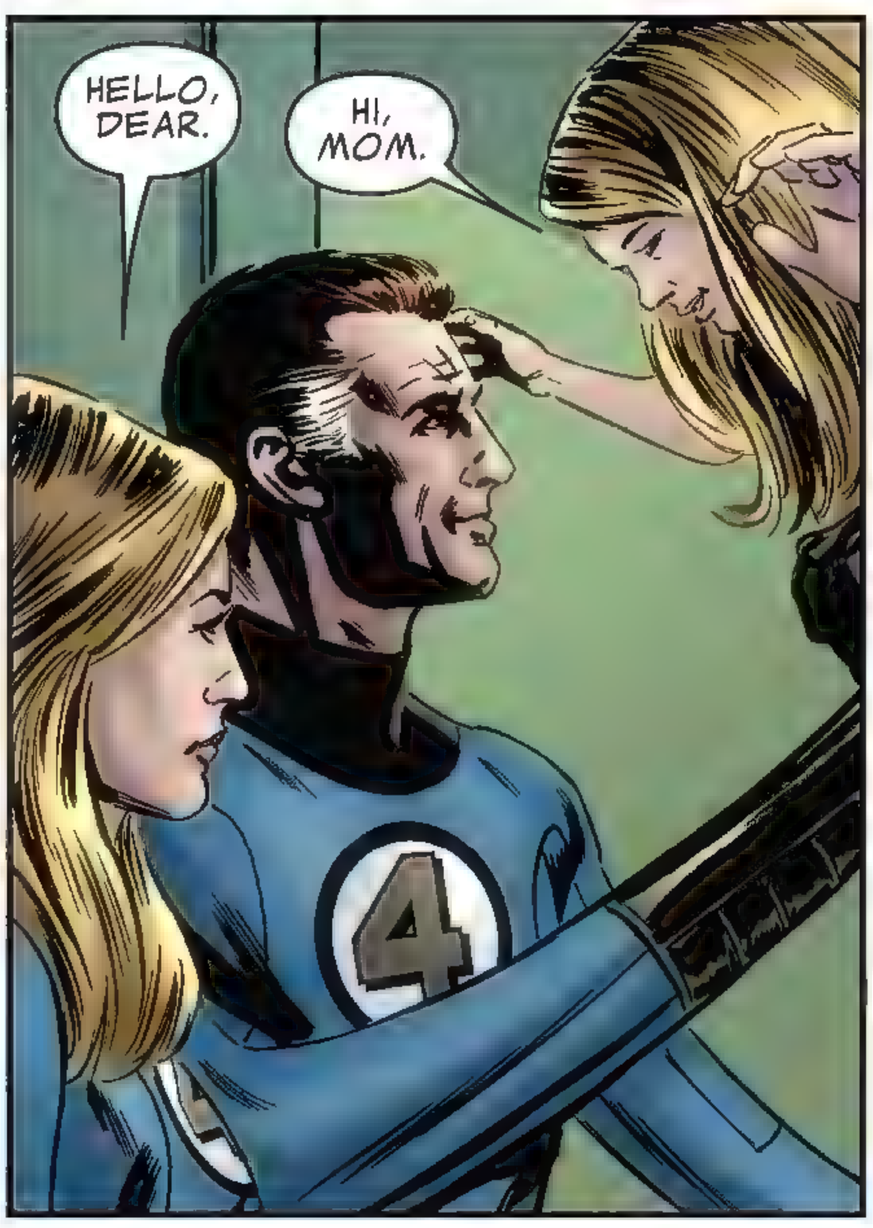
What now?

WE DISABLE THE DEVICE AND THEN I HAVE A VERY LONG TALK WITH THE RULING COUNCIL ABOUT HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR.

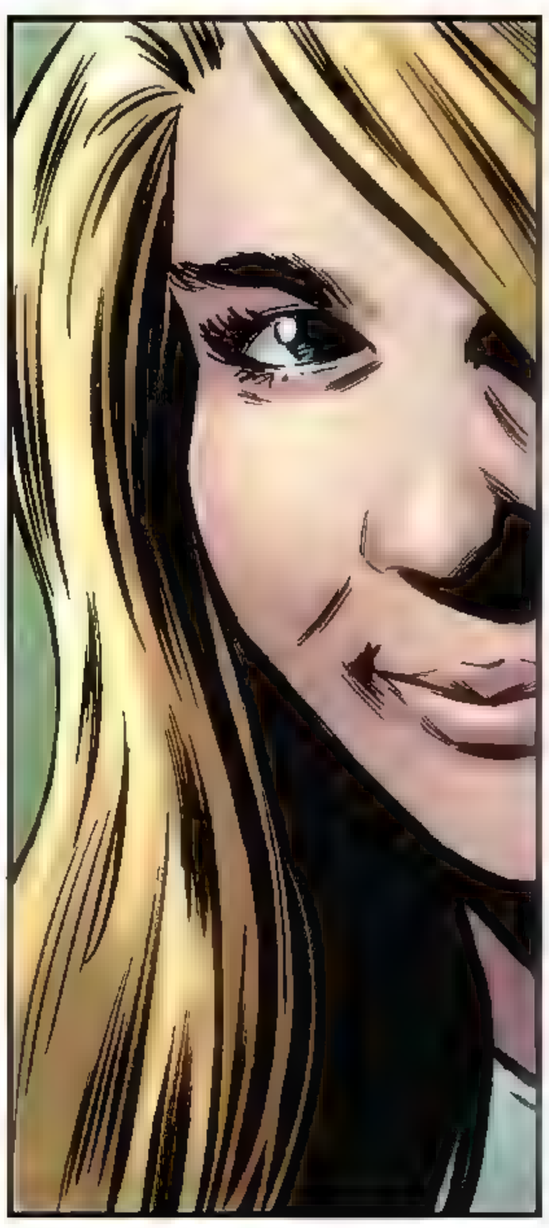
4 LATER.
I'M TELLING YOU, WE CAN MARKET THIS LOOK...

TOYS, GAMES... LITTLE ROCK-MONKEY DOLLS...IT'S A GOOD MOVE FOR YOU, BEN.
Johnny, I swear...I'm gonna--

UNCLE BEN!
Hey kids!
LOOK!
FUNNY!
What else is new...?


HELLO, DEAR.
HI, MOM.

DID YOU KEEP EVERYONE STRAIGHT WHILE WE WERE GONE?
UH-HUH.
DID ANYTHING EXCITING HAPPEN?



AND WHY WOULD DOOM WANT TO HELP REED RICHARDS?

HONESTLY, BEFORE I GOT HERE I HAD NO IDEA. BUT I WAS WATCHING YOU CLOSELY WHILE I WAS TELLING YOU WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND SOMETHING'S NOT QUITE RIGHT...

DELAYED PUPIL RESPONSE, YOUR BREATHING IS SLIGHTLY ERRATIC...AND THERE'S A TWITCH IN YOUR RIGHT HAND...

YOU'VE RECENTLY SUFFERED BRAIN DAMAGE, HAVEN'T YOU?

YES.

THAT'S IT, THEN.

SO WE HAVE A DEAL?

I'LL FIND A WAY TO RESTORE YOU TO YOUR NORMAL, BRILLIANT SELF, AND IN RETURN YOU ARE GOING TO HELP MY FATHER.

WE DO.

WELL?

ANYTHING?

NOTHING I COULDN'T HANDLE.

WELCOME HOME, DAD.

4 ELSEWHERE.

IT WAS A SUBCONSCIOUS, ALMOST INVOLUNTARY, NEED THAT BROUGHT NORRIN RADD, THE **SILVER SURFER**, TO THIS PLACE.

SOMETHING FAMILIAR TICKLING THE EDGE OF HIS MIND.

PULLING HIM OFF-CENTER AND AWAY, LIKE A SECOND CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

PULLING HIM HERE, DEEP BENEATH THE GROUND, TO SOMETHING BURIED IN THE EARTH.

SOMETHING SO...UNTHINKABLE THAT WHEN HE FINALLY CAN SPEAK ONLY A SINGLE WORD ESCAPES HIS LIPS:

UNACCEPTABLE.

AND WITH THAT WORD, THE WORLD TREMBLED... AND RIGHTLY SO.

ADMIT IT

MR. GRIMM...

YOU'VE SEEN

BETTER DAYS

DAY 1. 8:25 AM EST

Admit it, Mr. Grimm... you've seen better days.

Okay, Reed...this is gettin' old.

It's a hour past when you said the radiation from the High Evolutionary's machine would be worn...

Worn...

OFF.

URK!

AND THERE'S THE HANDSOME MUG I LOVE SO MUCH.

MUCH BETTER.

9:15AM EST

WHAM POPS

THE BEN!

THE BEN COMES FOR HIS MORNING FOOD!

WE EAT THE CEREAL, BEN...

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS.

WOULD YOU LIKE A BOWL OF THE COMPOSITE DYE, SUGAR AND FRUCTOSE AS WELL?

MORNIN', BOYS. AND I'M FINE, THANKS.

WHERE'S REED, JOHNNY?

PACKING. HE AND THE KIDS ARE SEEING SUSAN OFF.

OH... OKAY...

COME WITH ME. I NEED YOUR HELP WITH SOMETHIN'.

10:05AM EST

YOU TWO MIND YOUR FATHER WHILE I'M GONE...AND TRY TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE, OKAY?

OKAY. BYE, MOM.

HAVE FUN!

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG SOMETHING LIKE THIS TAKES. HOPEFULLY, I'LL BE BACK IN A COUPLE DAYS.

I'LL CALL YOU IF IT LOOKS OTHERWISE.

DON'T WORRY, WE'LL BE FINE.

AND...AH...ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T NEED ANY BACKUP ON THIS ONE?

I THINK I CAN HANDLE IT.

I'M REFEREEING A HARMLESS MEETING BETWEEN ROYALS, REED...I'LL BE BACK HOME IN YOUR ARMS IN NO TIME.

YOU KEEP THE HOUSE CLEAN, MR. RICHARDS

4 10:35AM EST

OKAY, THE FUTURE FOUNDATION SAID THIS STUFF IS SUPPOSED TO TURN ME BACK INTO A REGULAR PERSON FOR AROUND ONE WEEK A YEAR...*EVERY YEAR...*

ALL I NEED YOU TO DO IS RUN AND GET REED IF SOMETHIN' GOES WRONG...OKAY?

NO. NOT OKAY. ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GOING TO TAKE SOME POTION COOKED UP BY A BUNCH OF KIDS?

I MEAN...DO YOU KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING WHEN I WAS THEIR AGE?

ROUGHLY THE SAME THINGS YOU'RE DOIN' NOW?

EH... FAIR POINT.

HOPE IT DOESN'T KILL YOU.

SHADDUP.

WHOA...

URRGGH!

UHHHHH....

OH, NO...

WHA... WHAT? IT DIDN'T WORK?

OH GOD, NO, BEN... IT'S EVEN WORSE.

NO!

THEY SAID...

OH!

YOU #@%$^!%@#!!!!

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN YOUR FACE!

DO YOU KNOW HOW...IT FELT LIKE MY HEART WAS IN MY THROAT...

YOU SORRY, NO-GOOD $@^%#$@&!

CALM DOWN AND...

YOU CALM DOWN. YOU #%$^@&#!

HEY!

LOOK IN THE MIRROR... AGAIN.

OH... I...I...

OH MY GOD.

SO, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO START CRYING OR ANYTHING, ARE YOU?

IF YOU'RE GONNA BE A JERK...JUST LEAVE, JOHNNY.

I'M NOT SAYING YOU SHOULDN'T BE HAPPY... I'M SAYING MAYBE YOU SHOULD LOOK AT THIS IN A MORE OPPORTUNISTIC FASHION.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

INSTEAD OF GETTING ALL WEEPY, WE SHOULD GO OUT AND DO ALL THE THINGS YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO DO FOR A REALLY LONG TIME.

TWO GUYS OUT ON THE TOWN...HOW'S THAT SOUND?

PRETTY GOOD, ACTUALLY.

EXCELLENT! GIVE ME A COUPLE MINUTES TO MAKE SOME PHONE CALLS AND THEN YOU AND I ARE GOING TO MAKE UP FOR A LOT OF MISSED OPPORTUNITIES.

GET READY, BEN...

...THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BEST DAY YOU'VE HAD IN A VERY LONG TIME.

11:45AM EST

WALKING DOWNTOWN.
NO ONE LOOKS TWICE.

STOP

ONE

1:15PM EST

BEER. HOT DOGS. GIANTS VERSUS EAGLES.

McCOLLAM

BESS

GIANTS

99

GIANTS

5:45PM EST

EARLY DINNER WITH OLD FRIENDS.

4 8:30PM EST

THE FLOATING SUPER HERO POKER GAME AT THE THUNDER DOJO.

10:35PM EST

THANKS FOR THIS, JOHNNY... I REALLY DO APPRECIATE IT.

UH-HUH...

MAN...I KNOW I PARKED AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.

BE-BOOP!

AH! THERE IT--

WHO THE--

OH, GREAT...I KNEW THIS WAS GOIN' TOO GOOD. JUST WHAT WE NEEDED...

THE YANCY STREET GANG.

CHING-CHING, BOYS...HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT A LOW-YIELD, HIGH COMMISSION INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY?

DEAL OF A LIFETIME. *PROMISE.*

UH...THEY'RE NOT QUITE HOW I REMEMBER.

RECESSION. IT REALLY HIT THE BLUE COLLAR CRIMINAL CLASS HARD.

NOW THE GANG IS MADE UP OF FAILED DOT-COM-ERS, EX-WALL STREET TRADERS AND FAILED HEDGE FUND MANAGERS.

THESE GUYS'RE MUCH NASTIER.

YOU SAID IT.

NOW ARE YOU GOING TO LET US MANAGE WHATEVER MONEY YOU'VE GOT ON YOU, OR ARE WE GOING TO HAVE TO BREAK SOME PIGGY BANKS?

AND IF YOU'RE THINKING SOMEONE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS GOING TO BAIL YOU OUT, FORGET IT...

THOSE FUNDS ARE ALL TAPPED OUT.

UH-HUH. AROUND HERE, ONLY ONE OF US IS TOO BIG TO FAIL.

SO...WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, LADIES? A TAX-DEFERRED CASH DEPOSIT--OR IS THE DEAL GOING TO NEED SOME RESTRUCTURING?

I DUNNO... I'M THINKING IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU'VE GOTTEN TO PUNCH A NORMAL GUY IN THE FACE...

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

I WANT MY 401K BACK!

10:45PM EST (7:45PM PST)
UTOPIA.

HELLO, SUSAN. WELCOME TO UTOPIA.

WE WERE GETTING WORRIED... YOU'RE LATER THAN WE EXPECTED.

SORRY ABOUT THAT... I DECIDED TO TAKE A DETOUR AND CHECK IN ON THE CONTAINMENT OF THE *FOREVER CITY.*

I TRUST THAT YOU ARE DOING WELL, SCOTT.

AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED...

YOU KNOW EMMA, OF COURSE.

SUSAN.

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME LEAVING THE FANTASTICAR HERE WHILE I'M GONE.

APPARENTLY A CERTAIN ATTENDING DIGNITARY WAS INSISTENT ON MY JOINING HIS ROYAL CARAVAN TO THE SUMMIT.

EMMA.

YEAH, HE'S BEEN WAITING.

I HAVE INDEED.

AND WHILE NAMOR THE SUB-MARINER TARRIES FOR SO VERY FEW....

FOR YOU, SUSAN, I WOULD WAIT FOREVER.

I LOOK FORWARD TO BOTH OUR JOURNEY AND THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN OLD AND NEW ATLANTIS...

...AND HAVE EVERY EXPECTATION THAT A NEW UNION WILL BE FORMED IN THAT PLACE.

4 11:07PM EST

OW! I THINK I BROKE A TOOTH.

HAVE FUN?

GOD, YES. I'M GONNA SLEEP LIKE A BABY.

WELL, ONE LAST STOP TO MAKE BEFORE THEN.

GET IN.

SO, I'VE GOT TO ASK...

YOU THINK NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT ONE WEEK A YEAR IT'S GOING TO BE ENOUGH?

I MEAN, DO YOU THINK YOU'LL GET USED TO IT AND IN SOME WAY THAT'LL BE WORSE?

I'VE MISSED OUT ON A LOT OF THINGS, JOHNNY.

I THINK ALL ONE WEEK A YEAR MEANS IS I WON'T EVER TAKE IT FOR GRANTED...AND I'LL 'PRECIATE EVERYTHING I GET.

GOOD ENOUGH...

WE'RE HERE.

WHERE ARE...

OH.

I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD--

SHUT UP. YOU'RE GOING.

BZZZZZ

YES... WHO IS IT?

IT'S ME.

CAN I COME UP?

D. CORN

APARTMENT

N. SAUN

FAWCET

#9

MASTERS

A. Briggs

#2

HEY.

HELLO, BEN.

HEY.

IS SOMETHING WRONG?

WHY DO YOU SOUND...

OH...OH MY...YOU... YOU'RE...

IS THAT REALLY YOU?

IT'S ME, ALICIA.

2405
GOOD FOR YOU, BEN.

DAY 2. 12:05AM EST
THE BAXTER BUILDING.

OBSERVING SPATIAL ANOMALY IN QUADRANT 4, GRID 38, SUB-GRID A231....

H.E.R.B.I.E., I'M CONCERNED ABOUT THE IRREGULAR, CASCADING ENERGY BLEED WE'RE SEEING HERE.

PLEASE MARK FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ADVISE ME IF WE DON'T DETECT A FALL OFF IN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS.

FILE TITLE, DR. RICHARDS?

THE FAULT.

SAVED.

EXCELLENT.

NOW REPOSITION TO THE COORDINATES DESIGNATED *THE CRUNCH*...

THEN PLEASE ISOLATE SUB-SECTION...

WHA--

YOU HAVE MORE PRESSING MATTERS THAN STARGAZING THIS EVENING...

...MATTERS INVOLVING GALACTUS.

HELLO, NORRIN.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE... HOW ARE YOU, OLD FRIEND?

ANGRY.

"I FOUND WHAT WAS HIDDEN DEEP BENEATH THE EARTH, DR. RICHARDS..."

THE RADIATION THAT YOUR FAMILY EMITS IS UNIQUE. THE AREA WAS COVERED WITH IT.

SO I KNOW YOU WERE THERE.

"MORE INTERESTING THAN THAT WAS THE TACHYON DECAY...IT INDICATED A TEMPORAL PECULIARITY.

"HE WAS FROM THE FUTURE, BUT DIED IN THE PRESENT."

IT'S DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN.

WHAT I MEAN IS, OF COURSE I CAN EXPLAIN IT *TO YOU*...IT'S JUST...WELL, IT'S GOING TO TAKE A WHILE.

YOU MISUNDERSTAND ME, REED...

IT IS MY MASTER WHO SEEKS ANSWERS TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS.

AND HE WOULD HAVE THEM NOW.

WE CAN
ALL LIVE
FOREVER

DAY 2. 12:25 AM EST

OH, WHAT THE...!

SKKRRRRSCH!

JOHNNY... GO!

I'LL CATCH UP.

YOU BETTER NOT SCRATCH MY CAR.

EXPLAIN.

IN THE FUTURE, ON A DYING EARTH, A COLLECTION OF THE REMAINING HEROES AND VILLAINS CREATED A MACHINE TO OPEN A HOLE IN SPACE AND TIME TO SEND THE ROUGHLY ONE BILLION SURVIVORS OF THE HUMAN RACE BACK HERE.

FOR THIS TO WORK, THEY NEEDED AN IMMENSE ENERGY SOURCE.

"SO, AT GREAT COST, THEY CAPTURED YOU AND EXECUTED THEIR PLAN--SIPHONING WHAT THEY NEEDED FROM YOUR BODY TO POWER THEIR DEVICE.

"AS A RESULT, THEY WERE ALL TRANSPORTED BACK THROUGH TIME...AND YOU DIED."

THE SURFER FOUND YOUR REMAINS DEEP BENEATH THE EARTH BECAUSE I BURIED THEM THERE...

I WASN'T TRYING TO BE DECEPTIVE...IT *SEEMED WRONG* NOT TO.

WHERE ARE *THEY?*

FAR AWAY. ON AN ARTIFICIAL EARTH CIRCLING A DECAYED STAR ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS GALAXY.

LOCATE IT.

12.2988710
1902.5366
187.25008

THERE IS A CONCENTRATED TACHYON BLEED--CONSISTENT WITH THE ONE FROM THE REMAINS I FOUND--ON A WORLD ORBITING A SINGULARITY. IT'S NEAR THE ANHG TAUT, AT THE CENTER OF THE UL DAN AOTT...

WHAT THE HUMANS CALL THE CYGNUS-NORMA ARM OF THIS SPIRAL GALAXY.

JOHNNY!

ARE YOU OKAY, REED? TALK TO ME...SHOULD I BE FREAKING OUT ANY MORE THAN I ALREADY AM?

I'M FINE, JOHNNY...BUT THE SURFER FOUND FUTURE GALACTUS' DEAD BODY.

OH...SO MORE THEN.

I'M... NOT SO SURE.

THERE IS NO REASON FOR ALARM, JOHNNY STORM.

AS OF NOW, I MEAN THIS WORLD NO HARM.

I AM LEAVING NOW, AND SHORTLY I WILL TRAVEL TO THE ARTIFICIAL WORLD FOR FURTHER ANSWERS...

...YOU WILL ATTEND ME, REED RICHARDS...UNTIL THIS-- *AND OTHER MATTERS--* ARE RESOLVED.

I'M GOING WITH HIM.

REED, YOU'VE GOT TO BE...

NO, LISTEN, JOHNNY...I KNOW WHERE THIS IS HEADED. I *HAVE TO GO.*

AND SUSAN'S GONE, SO YOU AND BEN WILL NEED TO WATCH THE KIDS WHILE...

OH, WAIT! HE TOOK THE FORMULA.

WHAT?

BEN. HE TOOK THE FORMULA. HE'S HUMAN AGAIN.

IS HE OKAY?

YEAH.

REALLY?

HE'S GREAT. MORE THAN THAT, ACTUALLY...

FANTASTIC.

IT IS TIME.

"I'LL BE HOME SOON."

TAKE CARE OF THINGS, JOHNNY.

4 DAY 3. 3:15 PM EST
THE CENTRAL PACIFIC BASIN

I CAN TELL... YOU HAVE SOME PROBLEMS.

IT SAYS HERE THAT EACH PARTY WILL BE ALLOWED AN HONOR GUARD UP TO, BUT NOT TO EXCEED, TWELVE PEOPLE INSIDE THE NEGOTIATING CHAMBER...

AND THEN, FURTHER DOWN, YOU DESIGNATE THAT, EVEN WHILE THEY PRESENT THEMSELVES AS A UNIFIED FRONT, EACH OF THESE KINGDOMS IS TO BE CONSIDERED A SEPARATE ENTITY AND NEGOTIATED WITH INDIVIDUALLY IN REGARDS TO ANY FORMAL RATIFICATION OF A TREATY.

THIS IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE. MY MEN WILL BE OUTNUMBERED THREE TO ONE.

WELL, THERE'S NO AVOIDING THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE A VERY COMPLEX RULING STRUCTURE....BUT I THINK YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT, ANDROMEDA.

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN IS WHAT THIS MEANS POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY FOR ALL ATLANTEANS.

TRUST ME, YOU WANT THIS.

DO WE NOW?

AND WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WHAT SHE WANTS ARE ASSURANCES...

PATIENCE, PEACE AND THE EQUALITY OF ALL THINGS UNDER THE SEA.

WHICH ARE COMPROMISES, REALLY...BUT REGARDLESS, I REMAIN CORRECT, YES?

YOU ARE.

AND WOULD THIS MAKE YOU HAPPY, SUSAN?

YES, NAMOR... IT WOULD.

VERY WELL.

I'LL AGREE TO THE ARBITRARY CONDITIONS YOU HAVE SET FOR THE SUMMIT, BUT...

NO, MY LORD, I MUST PROTEST!

I...I... APOLOGIZE, I AM...

LEAVING, ANDROMEDA. NOW.

YES, MY LORD.

I CAN TELL... NOW SHE AND I ARE GOING TO BE BEST FRIENDS. FOREVER.

:TSSK: SHE IS LOYAL, AND SHE DOES NOT TRUST YOU.

ANDROMEDA BELIEVES THAT YOU ARE MANEUVERING ME INTO SOMETHING THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY IN MY PEOPLE'S BEST INTERESTS.

I WANT WHAT'S BEST...FOR *EVERYONE.*

IF ONLY THINGS WERE SO SIMPLE.

④ DAY 3. 10:25 PM EST
APPROACHING
THE KUIPER BELT

OH.

I DID NOT KNOW THAT YOU STILL HAD THIS.

TAA II IS MY HOME, REED RICHARDS...

HOW COULD I EVER ABANDON IT?

AS SOON AS MY HERALD RETURNS, WITH THE OTHERS, WE WILL DEPART IMMEDIATELY FOR THIS NU-WORLD.

WHAT OTHERS?

THERE WERE SEVERAL BEINGS ON YOUR WORLD THAT HAD PROLONGED EXPOSURE TO THE SAME PARTICLES FOUND ON MY REMAINS.

NOT MY FAMILY.

NO. OTHERS.

IT IS NOT LOST ON ME THAT YOU HAVE A UNIVERSALLY RELEVANT INTELLIGENCE, REED RICHARDS...

YOU NOTICED HOW RAPIDLY WE LEFT YOUR PLANET?

I DID...

IT WAS...INCONSISTENT WITH YOUR ESTABLISHED PROTOCOL OF ENERGY CONSERVATION--ESPECIALLY NOW KNOWING THE SURFER WILL COLLECT OTHERS THAT WILL, PROBABLY, NEED SECONDARY TRANSPORTATION.

BUT, CONSIDERING MY RELATIVELY SMALL SAMPLE SIZE WHEN COMPARED TO YOUR OVERALL LONGEVITY... I THOUGHT IT BEST TO CONTINUE OBSERVATION.

SILENTLY.

RIGHT NOW--MY PRIMARY GOAL IS THE PREVENTION OF MY UNNATURAL DEATH, BUT WE LEFT BECAUSE I FEARED THE OUTCOME OF A POTENTIAL CONFRONTATION IF I HAD STAYED ON THE EARTH.

YOU FEARED?

THE BLOCKS IN *HIS* MIND HAVE BEEN BROKEN AND HIS POWERS ARE ACTIVE AGAIN...

REED RICHARDS, WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT YOUR SON.

OH NO...

DAY 4. 8:45 PM EST
THE FUTURE FOUNDATION

OH, YES, FRANKLIN... AND THEN...

...AND THEN HE PUNCHED ME IN THE KISSER! WHAM!

OH...HE HIT THE BEN.

THIS IS WRONG. THE BEN SHOULD NOT BE HIT.

BEN HITTING IS VERY, VERY BAD.

SO WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE ROBOT--

ANDROID.

WHATEVER.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER IT BEAT YOU AND UNCLE BEN?

WELL, YOUR MOM AND DAD WERE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO SWITCH IT OFF, AND THEN--BECAUSE REED HAD ALL HIS EQUIPMENT SET TO SHUT DOWN AT EXACTLY 4 O'CLOCK--THE MAD THINKER WAS DEFEATED AND WE DESTROYED ALL THE ANTI-MATTER WEAPONS...

YEAH, SO THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS WHAT?

I DUNNO...IF YOU'RE GOING TO CONSTRUCT A KILLER ANDROID, USE SOMETHING MORE ADAPTIVE AND COMPLEX THAN APE DNA?

OH, I'M NOT SURE THAT MATTERS AS MUCH AS THE UNRELIABLE NATURE OF PHOTOVOLTAICS POWERING A MOBILE COMBAT UNIT.

THERMOELECTRIC WOULD HAVE BEEN A BETTER CHOICE.

THE THINKER USING UNSTABLE MOLECULES AS A STARTING POINT IS INTERESTING...

SURPRISING, ACTUALLY. I'VE MET THE THINKER BEFORE...

LIMITED FACULTIES... HORRIBLE BREATH...

AHEM!

YOU'RE ALL A BUNCHA WEIRDOS.

THE LESSON WAS-- JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE SUPER-SMART, IT DON'T MEAN YOU'VE THOUGHT OF EVERYTHIN'.

SO, WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH US, UNCLE BEN?

NOTHING. *OBVIOUSLY*...OKAY, YOU'VE ALL STAYED UP WAY LATER THAN WE SHOULD HAVE LET YOU.

NIGHT!

GOOD NIGHT.

HUNGRY?

YEAH, STUPID QUESTION.

...

DO YOU WANT KIDS, JOHNNY?

MORE THAN ANYTHING.

HEY, YOU TAKE YOURS WITH MAYONNAISE, RIGHT?

GROSS.

HOW ABOUT YOU? KIDS?

I TRIED NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT...

WELL, NOTHING LIKE A NICE, QUIET COUPLE OF DAYS ALONE WITH A HOUSE FULL OF KIDS TO HELP YOU FIGURE THAT OUT.

4 DAY 4. 9:47 PM EST
THE WORDS OF THE ANTI-PRIEST

SINCE THE BIRTH OF *EVERYTHING*, ALL LIFE WRITHES IN ANGUISH... THE SUFFERING OF BILLIONS OF YEARS OF PROLONGED DECAY-- THE SCARS SIT DEEP WITHIN US.

YOU KNOW THIS IS TRUE, BECAUSE THE PAIN RESONATES...

WE ALL SHARE THAT CORE DREAD... THAT SMALL, STILL VOICE COMING FROM THE OLDER, PRIMAL PLACE IN OUR MINDS...

WE ARE ALL DYING.

I HAVE BEEN SENT HERE TO TELL YOU THAT DEATH IS NOT *FATE*, IT IS A *CHOICE*.

ONE I OFFER TO ALL OF YOU.

GO, GO AND SPREAD THE *GOOD NEWS*.

WE CAN ALL *LIVE FOREVER*.

TSS

HE CALLS.

ANNIHILUS.

TSSHH

HOOOWWW LOOONNNGG?

TOMORROW, MASTER.

TOMORROW WE WILL SEIZE THE BAXTER BUILDING AND OPEN THE DOOR TO THE NEGATIVE ZONE...

THEN THE SECOND GREAT ANNIHILATION WAVE CAN BEGIN.

DAY 5. 7:07 PM EST
THE GULF OF THAILAND

WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING: SKARKA... WITHIN ATTUMA'S TERRITORIES, TWENTY PERCENT OF DARK WATER LOCATED IN ABANDONED SET-SPACE...AND FULL ACCESS TO THE GROTTO OF THE ANCIENTS.

YOU ASK FOR TOO MUCH.

LET'S KEEP OUR COOL HERE...

ANDROMEDA... THE REQUEST DOESN'T SEEM THAT EXCESSIVE.

I HAVE STATED WHAT WE ARE WILLING TO SACRIFICE.

WHICH IS ALMOST NOTHING!

THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE...

...AND BECOMING UNTENABLE.

WE ALL BREATHE THE SAME WATER. AND WHILE YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SHARE...YOU CANNOT CLAIM--AND CERTAINLY CANNOT HOLD-- EVERYTHING.

YOU MUST COMPROMISE, NAMOR.

WHILE YOU SLEPT, THE WORLD CHANGED, OLD KING.

AND IT CHANGED FOR THE BETTER.

I AGREED TO THIS MEETING SO THAT I COULD SEE YOUR FACE. TO SEE FOR MYSELF EXACTLY WHAT HAD AWAKENED FROM A DARK, LONG AGO TIME.

AND NOW THAT I HAVE...MY COURSE HAS BEEN SET.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

HERE IS THE ANSWER TO YOUR DEMANDS.

NAMOR!

NO!

COMPROMISE...?

NEVER.

THERE IS BUT ONE KING UNDER THE SEA...

IMPERIUS REX.

TOO LATE FOR PAUSE

TOO LATE FOR PEACE

DAY 5.
7:10 PM EST
THE GULF OF THAILAND.

BUTCHERS!
KILL THEM!
KILL THEM ALL!

NO!
EVERYONE, *STOP* THIS. STOP IT *NOW!*

TOO LATE FOR *PAUSE*-- TOO LATE FOR *PEACE.*
NAMOR HAS MURDERED *UL-UHAR*...SO HE MUST *DIE.*
HE WAS A FOOL TO DO SO WHEN WE SO CLEARLY OUTNUMBER HIM.

WHY WOULD...
OH, NO...

HE SET ALL THIS UP.

"THIS WAS HIS PLAN ALL ALONG."

BOOM

DISASTER! BETRAYAL!

NAMOR HAS KILLED US.

ALL IS LOST.

NO.

NO, I'M NOT GOING TO LET THAT HAPPEN.

NO ONE IS GETTING IN...

"AND NO ONE GETS OUT."

DAY 5, 8:43 PM EST
BEYOND THE KUIPER BELT.

THE SURFER HAS RETURNED WITH THE OTHERS...

...NOW WE BEND SPACE-TIME TO JUMP ACROSS THE GALAXY.

HELLO, REED!

IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME TIME.

I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE BACK ON EARTH, TED.

NO WONDER THE SURFER COLLECTED YOU...WE'RE HEADED TO NU-WORLD--THE WORLD YOU CASTLES BUILT--RIGHT NOW.

AND, MY GOD...

ALYSSA!

BEN AND JOHNNY TOLD ME THAT YOU HAD BEEN KILLED... BUT YOU LOOK... WELL, YOU LOOK JUST FINE.

OH, I'M FAR BEYOND THAT, REED.

THIS NEW ALYSSA MOY-2512 BODY IS THE PERFECT CONTAINER FOR MY REASSEMBLED PERSONA.

IT'S STILL ME, JUST BETTER THAN EVER.

COOL.

SO... WHY'RE WE HERE?

GALACTUS FOUND THE BODY THE CITIZENS OF NU-WORLD USED TO POWER THEIR TRAVEL THROUGH TIME.

OH, NO...

WHAT'S HE GOING TO DO ONCE WE GET THERE?

I HAVE NO IDEA.

4 FOURTEEN HOURS LATER.
DAY 6. 10:54 AM EST

WE HAVE REVERTED TO NORMAL SPACE.

OUR POSITION IS CURRENTLY THREE MILLION MILES FROM THE GRAVITATIONAL SINGULARITY.

INTERESTING...

"MY CONSCIOUSNESS EXTENDS BEYOND THE PERIMETER OF THIS SHIP-- I AM EXPERIENCING *CONVERGENCE.*

"AN UNDOCUMENTED BODY HAS BEEN CAUGHT IN TAA II'S GRAVITY WELL.

"AN ENTIRE PLANET COMPRISED OF SENTIENT A.I.S."

I WILL INVESTIGATE IMMEDIATELY.

NO. LEAVE IT FOR LATER.

FOCUS MUST REMAIN FIXED...

...THESE ARE THE CORRECT COORDINATES?

YES.

THERE IT IS...

THE BLACK HOLE AROUND WHICH NU-WORLD CIRCLES.

THEN WE MOVE FORWARD...

"CLOSER TO THE PLANET AND TO TRUTH ITSELF."

4 DAY 6. 2:12 PM EST
THE WORDS OF THE ANTI-PRIEST.

THE TIME IS NOW...GO! PIERCE THE PORTAL!

MAKE A WAY FOR OUR MASTER!

CONDITION RED!

PARTICLE ACCELERATION. TRANSLOCATION IMMINENT.

UH-OH.

BECOME DEATH--

EXPERIENCE LIFE!

POP!

PLOP!

OH, CRAP.

POOP!

OOF!

YOU OKAY, BEN?

I'M FINE. OOF!

YOU GET OUTTA HERE!

YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE THIS?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME--WORRY ABOUT THE KIDS!

SCARED.

CLEAR COMMUNICATION IS PARAMOUNT IN SITUATIONS LIKE THESE.

EXTRAPOLATE.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES BY DR. P.H. MANN STATES THAT A PERSONAL CONNECTION IS THE MORTAR USED IN BUILDING ALL RELATIONSHIPS.

SUGGESTIONS?

TELL HIM ABOUT YOURSELF.

AH...

HELLO. MY NAME IS KORR. I LIKE ROMANTIC COMEDIES AND GAMES OF CHANCE... DO YOU--PERHAPS-- ROLL THE BONES?

HMMM. INTERESTING.

HSSSSSSS.

AHHHHHHHHH!

EVERYONE, RELAX...

...I'VE GOT THIS.

SLAUNK

GROSS.

OH, MY GOD, ALEX, DID YOU KILL...

NO...I...THEY ONLY LOOK HUMAN ON THE OUTSIDE, JOHNNY. UNDERNEATH THEY'RE GIANT INSECTS OR SOMETHING.

I HAD TO USE MY GRAVITY POWERS TO SKEW THE DENSITY OF THEIR HEADS...SO THE BODIES COULDN'T SUPPORT THE WEIGHT.

I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE.

DID YOU SAY *BUGS?*

OH, NO...

IS EVERYONE OKAY? WHERE IS--

WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?

MMIRE MICCRCIEM!

AH

NIGH

HU

LUUUH

SSSSSSSSSSS

MEVEC ME M ZENTO!

S MORT !MO XXEMG OC!

EGG SACKS.

OH, GOD...

YOU KNOW SOMETHIN' I DON'T?

WE'VE GOT TO GET EVERYONE OUT OF HERE. THEY'RE GOING TO TRY TO GET INTO REED'S LAB TO ACCESS THE NEGATIVE ZONE...

WHERE'S VAL?

FRANKLIN, WHERE ARE THE REST OF THE KIDS?

HEADED TO THE LAB.

OH... THAT'S NOT GOOD.

DAY 6, 2:26 PM EST
NU-WORLD.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE FUTURE, THE EARTH'S SUN WILL INEXPLICABLY WEAKEN... AS IF SOMETHING HAD UNNATURALLY CONSUMED TOO MUCH OF ITS ENERGY.

THE RESULTANT COOLING OF THE EARTH WILL CAUSE MASS STARVATION, DEATH AND DISEASE.

TWELVE BILLION PEOPLE WILL DIE.

HUMANITY WAS GOING TO BECOME EXTINCT, AND AS YOU NOW KNOW, THE PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET BUILT A TEMPORAL ESCAPE HATCH AND USED YOU TO POWER IT.

THIS RESULTED IN YOUR DEATH.

THIS FUTURE... THESE ACTIONS... CAN THEY BE AVOIDED?

THINK CAREFULLY ON THIS, RICHARDS...

IS THERE A WAY TO PREVENT ME FROM NEEDING TO DESTROY YOUR PLANET TO PRESERVE MY OWN EXISTENCE?

I HAVE HUNDREDS OF WORLDS LIKE THIS...

TAKE A LOOK... NOW PRETEND THERE IS NO HORIZON.

THIS IS HOW WE PERFORM SURGERY ON THE UNIVERSE...

EVEN IF I CAN'T FIX THE SUN--AND I THINK I CAN--I KNOW A WAY TO FEED EVERYONE ON THE PLANET...

I BELIEVE THAT FUTURE CAN BE AVOIDED.

AND YOU WILL DO THIS--TO SAVE YOUR PLANET?

YES. I CAN...*SOLVE EVERYTHING.*

BUT THE COST...

..IS NOW *NECESSARY.*

I HAVE DECIDED, HUMAN...

I WILL ALLOW YOU TO ATTEMPT TO SAVE YOUR WORLD.

SURFER, ESCORT THEM BACK TO THE SHIP WHILE I REMAIN HERE.

I HUNGER.

WHAT? *NO!*

THERE ARE SIX BILLION PEOPLE ON THIS WORLD...

YOU CANNOT KILL ALL OF THEM.

WHO TESTS GOD AND DOES NOT WAGER THEIR LIFE?

A PRICE WILL BE PAID.

THE GATEWAY TO EARTH LOCATED AT THE *WHEEL* REMAINS OPERATIONAL.

WE COULD GET AS MANY PEOPLE THROUGH THAT AS POSSIBLE.

WILL YOU LET US SAVE SOME OF THEM?

THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD LIES IN YOUR SURVIVAL, AND YOU WISH TO RISK YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF EVERYONE ON EARTH ON A FOOL'S ERRAND?

I CAN'T WATCH THIS AND DO NOTHING--I HAVE TO TRY.

THEN DO WHAT YOU MUST...

...AS WILL I.

DAY 6. 2:35 PM EST
THE GULF OF THAILAND.

ANY PROGRESS?

YOU ARE A ROCK, SUSAN OF THE STORM.

YOUR SHIELD HAS HELD FOR AN ENTIRE DAY...

BUT THE PRISONERS DECLINE COOPERATION.

NAMOR REFUSES TO BEND.

BRING *HIM* TO ME.

LEAVE US.

YOU LOOK LOVELY.

SOMETIMES I THINK I UNDERSTAND YOU, AND THEN YOU GO AND--

THIS IS NOT WHAT I WANTED.

WHY DID YOU DO IT?

BECAUSE I HAD TO.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING ON HERE, SUSAN-- YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING.

EXCUSE ME?

THINGS ARE NOT AS THEY SEEM.

"THESE OLD ATLANTEANS--RELICS FROM A DARKER TIME--WERE ONCE THE SCOURGE OF THE OCEAN. BY FUNCTION: PREDATORS, PILLAGERS AND PARASITES.

"WHAT THEY COULD NOT KILL, THEY TRIED TO POSSESS. WHAT THEY COULD NOT POSSESS, THEY TRIED TO CONSUME... A RAVENOUS BEAST THAT DOMINATED THE GREAT EXPANSE.

"MILLENNIA AGO, WE DEFEATED THEM. THEY WERE HUNTED TO EXTINCTION AND ANY RECORD OF THEM STRICKEN FROM OUR BOOKS OF KNOWLEDGE.

"THE ONLY RECORDS REMAINING WERE THE SECRET CHRONICLES PASSED DOWN FROM KING TO KING. IT'S A VISUAL HISTORY THAT, IN THIS INSTANCE, CONTAINED EXAMPLES OF EACH OF THE THREE STRAINS..."

IT'S WHY I NEEDED TO SEE THEM BEFORE I SET MY COURSE OF ACTION.

IT'S BEEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS, NAMOR. HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THEY HAVEN'T CHANGED?

IT'S CALLED UL-ULGAR. IT'S THEIR PROTOCOL FOR HOW THEY HANDLE INTERACTION WITH AN OUTSIDE GROUP THEY HAVEN'T ENCOUNTERED BEFORE.

THEY FEIGN ACCEPTANCE, ASKING A PERSON IN A LEADERSHIP POSITION OF THE OTHER GROUP TO ACT AS AN AMBASSADOR FOR THEM...

...THIS PERSON IS CALLED UL-OYT, OR *EMISSARY.*

OH.

AFTER THEY HAVE COLLECTED ALL THE INFORMATION THEY POSSIBLY CAN--OBSERVING ALL THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE OTHER GROUP--THE UL-OYT IS THEN OCCASIONALLY USED AS LEVERAGE OR, MORE COMMONLY, AN EXAMPLE.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

THESE OLD ATLANTEANS ARE USING YOU. AT BEST, AS AN OFFERING... AT WORST, AS A SACRIFICE.

I BELIEVE THEY PLAN ON KILLING YOU, SUSAN.

DAY 6. 2:38 PM EST
THE PORTAL TO THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

ALMOST DONE.

WHAT IS IT?

A NASTY PIECE OF WORK. VARIABLE PARTICLE INJECTORS... INFRARED TRACKING... ROTATING POWER CORES...

BENTLEY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT...

IT'S A GIANT GUN, UNCLE BEN.

AND I MADE A BOMB.

YOU BOYS GO CRAZY.

MOVE ASIDE, CHILDREN.

DADDY GONNA WORK.

ZUP ZUP ZU-ZU- ZAAKKKKK

VAL, WE'VE GOT TO LOCK DOWN THE NEGATIVE ZONE PORTAL...

CAN YOU DO THAT?

ALREADY DONE, UNCLE JOHNNY.

BUT THE SHIELDING...

...I'M WORRIED THAT--

POP!

AAIIIIIEEE!

I'M ECHO IMEGA..

SQUUEEE!

I LOVE YOU.

SHEK

BOOOM!

LOOK OUT!

WHAT WERE YOU SAYING ABOUT THE PORTAL--SOMETHING ABOUT THE SHIELDING?

DAD HAD TO REPLACE IT WHEN ALL THE VIBRANIUM ON THIS SIDE OF THE NEGATIVE ZONE BECAME INERT...

HE CREATED A NEW DOOR BASED ON PAST PARAMETERS, BUT IT'S NEVER ACTUALLY BEEN TESTED FROM THIS SIDE.

WELL, WILL IT HOLD?!?

KNOWING DAD... PROBABLY.

SO, UNLESS THEY SHOW US SOMETHING WE HAVEN'T SEEN BEFORE, THEY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH.

UH...DEFINE SOMETHING WE HAVEN'T SEEN BEFORE.

MY WEIRD DEREK!

OH, CRAP...

MMMMMMMM

AAAA

ANNIHILUS, BRING OTS IG BAZZAR!

IE Z.IMUEZ EGMM MM! IHM WMMGG

BMIZR MICRACUEM.

TELL HIM

THIS IS WHERE I MADE MY STAND

DAY 6. 2:45 PM EST
THE GULF OF THAILAND.

DAY 6. 2:45 PM EST
NU-WORLD.

DAY 6. 2:45 PM EST
THE BAXTER BUILDING.

BEHIND ME, CHILDREN.

WE'LL BE GOING NOW.

NO! WE CAN'T LEAVE THE GATE OPEN...

UNCLE JOHNNY!

YOU HAVE TO REACH THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM... THERE'S A FAILSAFE...

THEY'RE FOCUSING ON ME AND BEN... WE'RE BEING OVERRUN, VAL--CAN'T GET TO IT.

ALEX?!!

TRYING.

THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM...

I *THINK* WE HAVE TO RUN FOR IT.

PUNCH!
PUNCH!
PUNCH!
OH.
SOMEBODY WANNA SHUT THAT KID UP? I'M TRYIN' REAL HARD NOT TA GET KILLED OVER HERE.
WHY IS HE...?
WHAM!
LEECH WANTED SOMEONE TO KNOCK HIM OUT.
WHY WOULD...?
WHOA.

BUG SPRAY.

GOT IT. SHIELD'S UP.

OKAY, SO SOMEONE WANT TO TELL ME WHEN FRANKLIN GOT HIS POWERS BACK?

YOU SHOULD PAY CLOSER ATTENTION, UNCLE JOHNNY. IT'S BEEN PRETTY OBVIOUS IF YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR.

WHY DO YOU THINK DAD HAS HAD LEECH ROOMING WITH HIM?

I DON'T THINK WE CAN DO THAT, UNCLE BEN.

THE SHIELD ISN'T GOING TO HOLD.

AHHHHHHHHH

BACKUP'S ON THE WAY. CALLED THE AVENGERS-- TIME TO CLEAR OUT OF HERE AND WAIT FOR THE CAVALRY.

IT WASN'T MADE FOR THIS...

IF THE MAIN CONTROLS HADN'T GOTTEN DESTROYED BY THE BUGS, I COULD ACTIVATE THE STILL-FUNCTIONAL VIBRANIUM SHIELDING ON THE OTHER SIDE FROM HERE...

SO WHAT ARE...

WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH AND TURN IT ON MANUALLY, AND WE HAVE TO DO IT RIGHT NOW...BEFORE EVERYONE OVER THERE KNOWS THE DOORWAY IS OPEN.

NO WAY.
NOT HAPPENIN'
LISTEN, WE JUST NEED A COUPLE OF MINUTES... FRANKLIN COULD PROBABLY BUY US THAT BY HIMSELF...
I ONLY NEED SOME OF THE FUTURE FOUNDATION.
I COULD TOTALLY SQUASH THEM.
SEE?
POP
THERE'S A SECOND ANNIHILATION WAVE WAITING TO INVADE EARTH AND WE'RE ALL THAT STANDS IN ITS WAY.
TICK-TOCK, SUPER HEROES.
REED'S GONNA KILL US.
OKAY, EVERYONE...BEN'S ALREADY CALLED FOR THE AVENGERS--SO BACKUP'LL BE HERE AS SOON AS THEY CAN--BUT RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH THERE AND FIX THIS THING. WHILE WE'RE GONE, THE DRAGON IS IN CHARGE...
YES, SIR.
ALL RIGHT, THEN...
ANYTHING THAT COMES THROUGH THAT PORTAL THAT ISN'T US, YOU BURN TO A CRISP. UNDERSTAND?
...HERE WE GO.
CHICHLACK

4 THE GULF OF THAILAND.

IS IT TRUE?

I DO NOT--

IS WHAT NAMOR SAID ABOUT THE HISTORY BETWEEN YOUR TWO PEOPLE'S THE TRUTH?

THAT YOU WERE AT WAR--OH, AND THAT YOU'RE USING ME AS SOME KIND OF...PAWN?

THAT WOULD BE AN INSUFFICIENT ACCOUNTING OF OUR HISTORY... AND CERTAINLY UNTRUE IN REGARDS TO YOU, SUSAN.

HE LIES!

NO.

WE ARE NOT WHO WE USED TO BE.

YOU. LIE.

IS SHE NOT THE UL-OYT? YOUR 'SACRIFICE' FOR THE 'TIME OF CHANGE'?

NO, SHE IS NOT. AS I SAID-- WE ARE NOT WHO WE USED TO BE. AND SUSAN OF THE STORM IS MUCH, MUCH MORE.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

THE UL-UHARI REMAIN IN CONTROL OF THE SHARED THRONE. AS THE UL-UHAR WAS MURDERED BY THE CHILD-KING NAMOR, DOMINION FALLS TO HIS CHILDREN. AS HIS CHILDREN ARE TOO YOUNG TO ASCEND, THE CROWN PASSES TO THEIR STEWARD.

WHAT?

SUSAN RICHARDS... IT IS YOU WHO RULES HERE NOW.

NU-WORLD.

ANY THOUGHTS AS TO HOW WE'RE GOING TO EVACUATE EVERYONE OFF-PLANET?

AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE PEOPLE?

SENTIENCE IS A REQUIREMENT FOR INDIVIDUALITY, REED. SO I WOULDN'T REALLY CLASSIFY THEM AS WHAT YOU AND I WOULD CONSIDER...'PEOPLE.'

AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO SAVE THEM.

WHAT?!

IT'S THIS WAY.

WE LIED TO GALACTUS. NATALIE X HAS ABSORBED THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF EVERY PERSON THAT LIVED ON NU-WORLD.

WE CAN 'SAVE EVERYONE' JUST BY GETTING HER OFF THE PLANET.

MY GOD.

NO, REED RICHARDS.

GODDESS-- MOTHER X--THE WORLDMIND.

LIGHTWAVE. CAN SHE TRAVEL?

YES. BUT SHE IS FRAGILE...ALL OF THIS WAS *UNEXPECTED.*

RRRUMMBLE

SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT.

NO, IT'S NOT. WE MUST HURRY...

MY FORMER MASTER'S CONVERSION RATE IS MUCH HIGHER THAN NORMAL.

GALACTUS IS NOT TRYING TO CONSUME THIS WORLD...

"...HE SIMPLY WISHES TO DESTROY IT."

4 THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

THAT'S IT, FRANKLIN... YOU'RE DOIN' JUST FINE.

OKAY...ARTIE, LET'S GET A LOOK AT WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH...BENTLEY, GIVE US A COUNTDOWN.

AS EXPECTED. THE INITIAL INVASION FORCE WAS TO SECURE--AND DILATE--THE PORTAL. THE LARGER ANNIHILATION WAVE IS IN A DEFENSIVE PERIMETER POSITIONED SOME TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND KILOMETERS AWAY...

ASSUMING THEY'VE BEEN ALERTED AN AREN'T GOING TO JUST BOMB US--AND THE GATE--TO DEATH FROM ABOVE... FIGURE MAXIMUM VELOCITY, LANDING, DISEMBARKING... MAYBE FOUR MINUTES.

IS THAT GOING TO BE ENOUGH TIME?

HAS TO BE...

MAN, THIS IS A NIGHTMARE.

UH-HUH. TRIPLE REDUNDANCY, INTEGRATED SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE.

QUANTUM ENCODING... THERE'S NO REPROGRAMMING THE LOCKING MECHANISM.

THE REED IS VERY, VERY CLEVER.

SUPER, DAD... JUST FREAKING SUPER.

IDEAS?

REMOTE ACCESS?

THE LOCKING SEQUENCE HAS TO BE KEYED AFTER SHIELD ACTIVATION.

WE WOULD NEED A BIG ENOUGH POWER SOURCE, A TRANSMISSION SUPERSTRUCTURE, TECH-SPECIFC ARCHITECTURE...AND PROBABLY MORE TIME.

WHICH WE DON'T HAVE.

WOULDN'T MATTER... YOU'RE NOT ACCOUNTING FOR BACKGROUND RADIATION OR DATA SINKS...

YOUR CHANCE OF SUCCESS IS AROUND POINT-ZERO-ZERO-EIGHT PERCENT.

THINK HARDER.

ANY IDEA IF WE ENHANCE THE ENERGY SHIELDING ON OUR SIDE THAT WE CAN HOLD THEM OFF LONGER?

YEAH, WE COULD USE THE BUILDING'S PRIMARY DYNAMO.

MAYBE. IF THE SHIELD *WAS* POWERED BY THE BUILDING'S MAIN GENERATORS-- WAIT...

ARE WE FACTORING THAT ANNIHILUS *DOES* OR *DOES NOT* POSSESS THE COSMIC CONTROL ROD?

FIGURE HE DOES.

:PFFFFFT:

POINT-ZERO-FIVE PERCENT.

WE WOULD BE MUCH BETTER OFF JUST NUKING THIS PLACE.

WE COULD DO THAT.

WOULD IT COMPLETELY RUPTURE THE PORTAL? THAT WOULD BE DOING THEIR JOB FOR THEM.

NOT SURE. BUT EVEN IF IT DIDN'T...THE DEAD ZONE FROM THE FALLOUT SHOULD BUY US ENOUGH TIME...

SO, AGAIN... STALL? THAT'S OUR BEST IDEA?

AND WITH WHAT BOMB?

YOU'RE ALSO FORGETTING THAT EVEN THE ENHANCED SHIELD WOULDN'T MAINTAIN FULL INTEGRITY IN PROXIMITY TO GROUND ZERO...WE COULD DIE OF RADIATION POISONING LEAKING THROUGH INTO THE LAB.

NO OTHER CHOICE--COST OF DOING BUSINESS...

WE HAVE TO STOP THEM... I'M SURE THERE'S SOME FISSILE MATERIAL IN ONE OF THE LABS.

CHANCE OF SUCCESS: *EIGHT PERCENT.*

I FIND THE IDEA OF BUILDING ANOTHER BOMB *VERY EXCITING.*

SO THAT'S IT THEN.

NO.

STILL TOO MUCH RISK, ALEX.

THE ODDS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH.

SOMEONE'S GOING TO HAVE TO STAY BEHIND.

4 THE GULF OF THAILAND.

WHAT IS THIS?

WHAT IS THIS?

LOOKS PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD TO ME.

I'M DROPPING THE FORCE-FIELD SURROUNDING THIS BASE.

CALL OFF YOUR SHIPS, NAMOR. THIS IS OVER.

SUSAN, THIS IS NOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO PUT YOURSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF.

BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHERE I AM, ISN'T IT?

KNOW THAT I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL THESE THINGS ARE DEAD--

KNOW THAT THERE WILL BE WAR.

NO. I THINK NOT-- THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANYTHING OF THE SORT HERE.

YOU'RE GOING TO HONOR THE TREATY THAT WE HAMMERED OUT ON THE WAY HERE-- YOU'RE GOING TO HONOR YOUR WORD.

THESE PEOPLE ARE UNDER MY PROTECTION NOW.

YOUR PROTECTION?

SINCE WHEN DOES YOUR AUTHORITY EXTEND BEYOND THE SHORE?

I AM KING OF ALL THE OCEANS.

YOU'LL HONOR THE DEAL.

WOMAN, YOU DO NOT TURN AWAY FROM--

OOFFPH!

HONOR THE DEAL, NAMOR.

I'M DONE ASKING NICELY.

YOU DARE!

YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT I DO.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, THESE ARE MY PEOPLE NOW. I RULE HERE.

AND I AM A QUEEN THAT BOWS TO NO KING.

GOD, YOU ARE MAGNIFICENT.

OUR AGREEMENT STANDS, NAMOR. WE'LL WORK OUT ANY OTHER PROBLEMS WE HAVE LATER...

RIGHT NOW, I'M GOING HOME.

NU-WORLD. THE WHEEL.

WE'RE THERE!

THANK GOD! ALL I NEED TO DO NOW IS...

CRA-CRASH!

NO!

SALVATION.

A MAN LIFTED UP WHEN HE WAS SURELY GOING TO BE BROUGHT LOW.

AND WHY WOULD YOU DAMN THE MAESTRO TO THE HELL YOU LEAVE BEHIND?

DID YOU FORGET ME, TEDDY?

...

THERE'S NO PLACE FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU ON EARTH.

THEN PREPARE FOR THE ABYSS, LITTLE MAN. WE JOURNEY THERE... *TOGETHER.*

NO!
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS...WE ALL GO.
THE WORMHOLE IS STABLE.
ALL WE NEED ARE THE COORDINATES FOR EARTH, TED.
DONE.
SAY GOODBYE FOREVER TO NU-WORLD.
LET'S GO HOME.

THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

SOMEONE'S GOTTA STAY? THAT'S IT... THERE'S NOTHIN' ELSE?

BENTLEY?

SIXTY-THREE SECONDS UNTIL THE ANNIHILATION WAVE HITS.

ONE MINUTE, UNCLE BEN...

WE'RE SIMPLY OUT OF TIME.

WELL, THEN...IT'S BEEN FUN.

GET EVERYONE ON THE OTHER SIDE, JOHNNY.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE JOKING.

NOT THIS TIME, PAL.

BECAUSE OF YOU, I JUST HAD ONE OF THE BEST WEEKS OF MY LIFE...

NO WAY I GO OUT OWIN' YOU.

C'MON!

THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT THINKING OF... RIGHT?

ISN'T THERE ANYTHING ELSE?

NO.

OKAY... THAT SETTLES IT THEN.

THEY'RE HERE. INCOMING.

BOOM!

JOHNNY! WHAT'RE YOU...

NO!

HMMMMM

TKK

YOU STUPID, DUMB...

OPEN THIS BACK UP! OPEN IT!

WE CAN'T. THERE'S NO TIME LEFT! IF HE'S GOING TO ACTIVATE THE SHIELD IT HAS TO BE NOW.

I COULD MAKE MORE TIME.

NO. THAT'S NOT... THAT'S...

VAL, JUST TELL HIM HOW TO WORK THE THING,

OKAY, JOHNNY, LISTEN CLOSELY...

ENTER THE ACCESS CODE (4-3-2-1)--THAT'LL ENGAGE THE FAIL-SAFE LOCKDOWN.

THIS WILL ALSO RANDOMIZE THE ACCESS CODE, SO NO ONE ON YOUR SIDE--INCLUDING YOU--WILL BE ABLE TO OPEN IT AGAIN.

DAD WILL HAVE A BACKDOOR BUILT IN.

WE'LL BE BACK.

ENTERING THE CODE.

WHEN YOU SEE REED... YOU TELL HIM...

TELL HIM THIS IS WHERE I MADE MY STAND.

ENGAGING THE LOCKING MECHANISM.

URK!

WAI...

WAIT!
NO!
NO!
NO! NO!
NO!
UNBELIEVABLE.
YOU DON'T WISH IT ANY MORE THAN I DO.

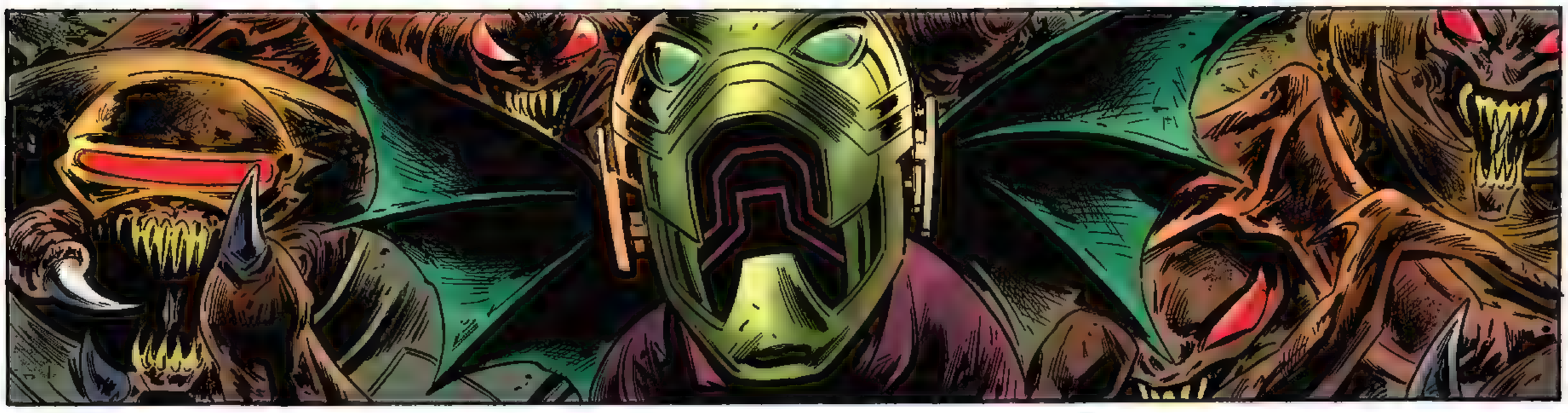
SO THIS IS IT.

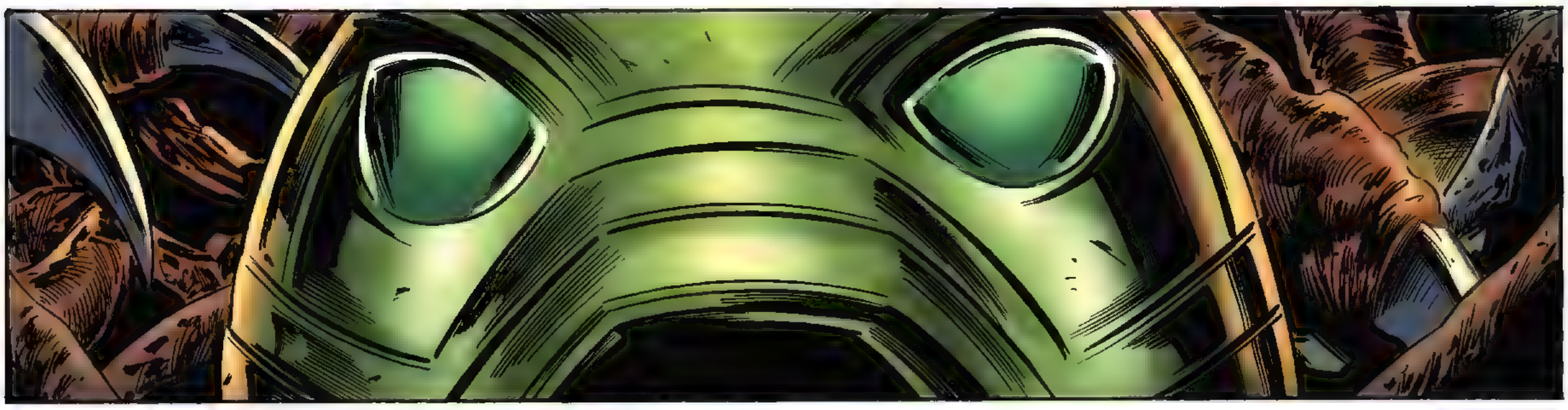
A BILLION TO ONE...

YOU THINK I'M AFRAID OF THAT?

YOU THINK I'M AFRAID OF THAT?!

FLAME ON!!



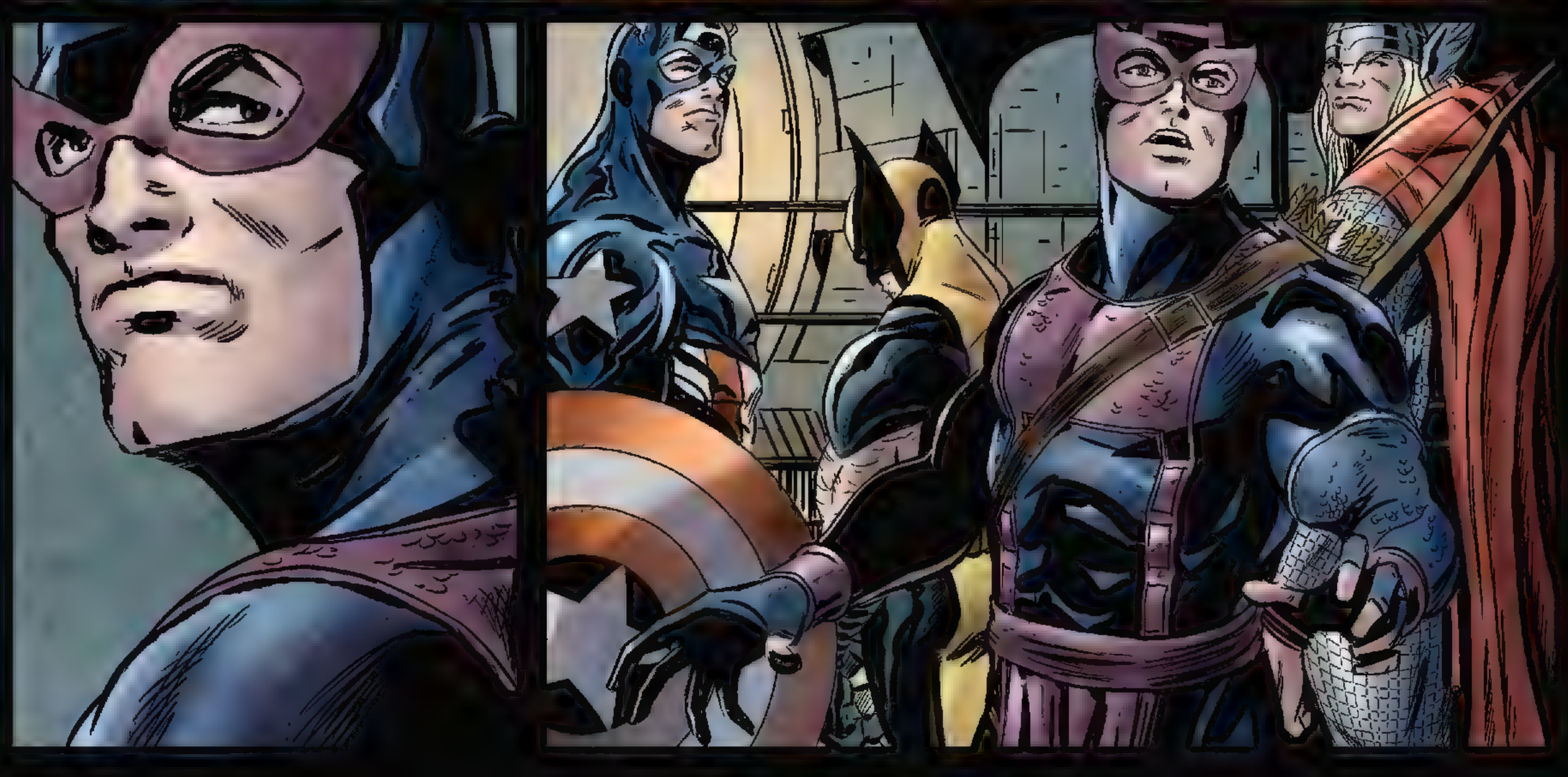


OH, GOD, JOHN...

THE LAST STAND OF JOHNNY STORM

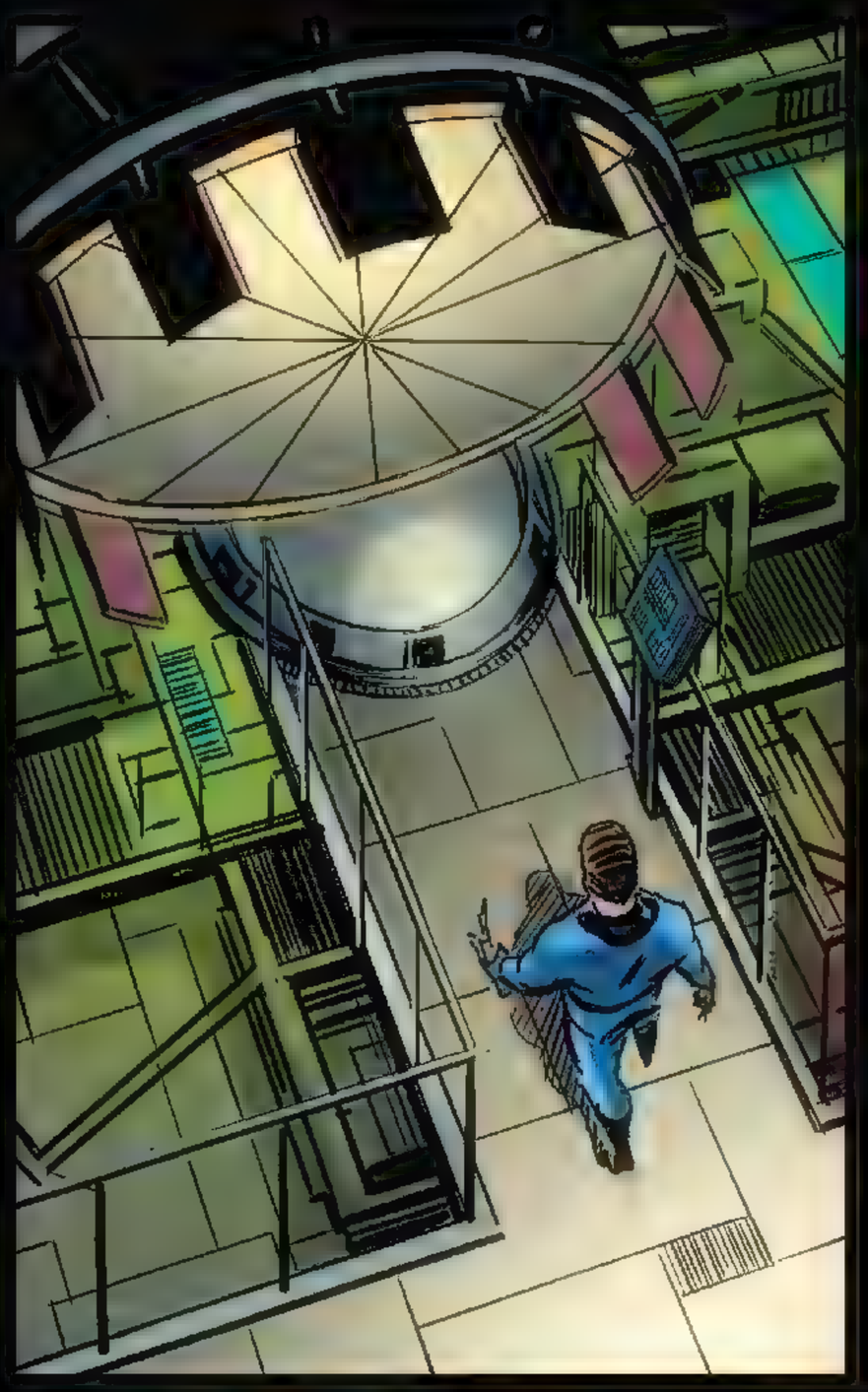
I'M HOME

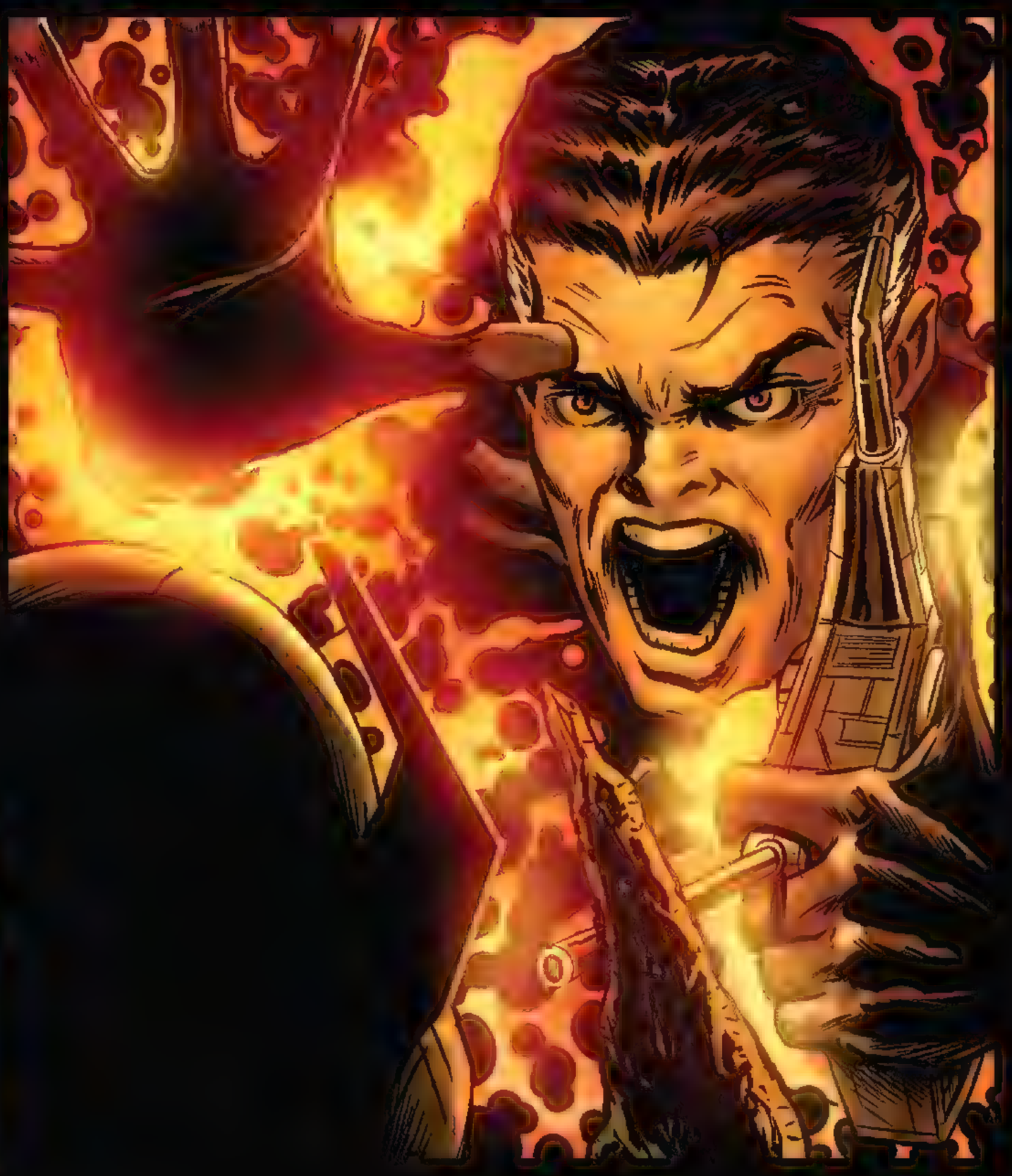
4 A MONTH OF MOURNING.
DAY 1.



DAY 3.

DAY 4.

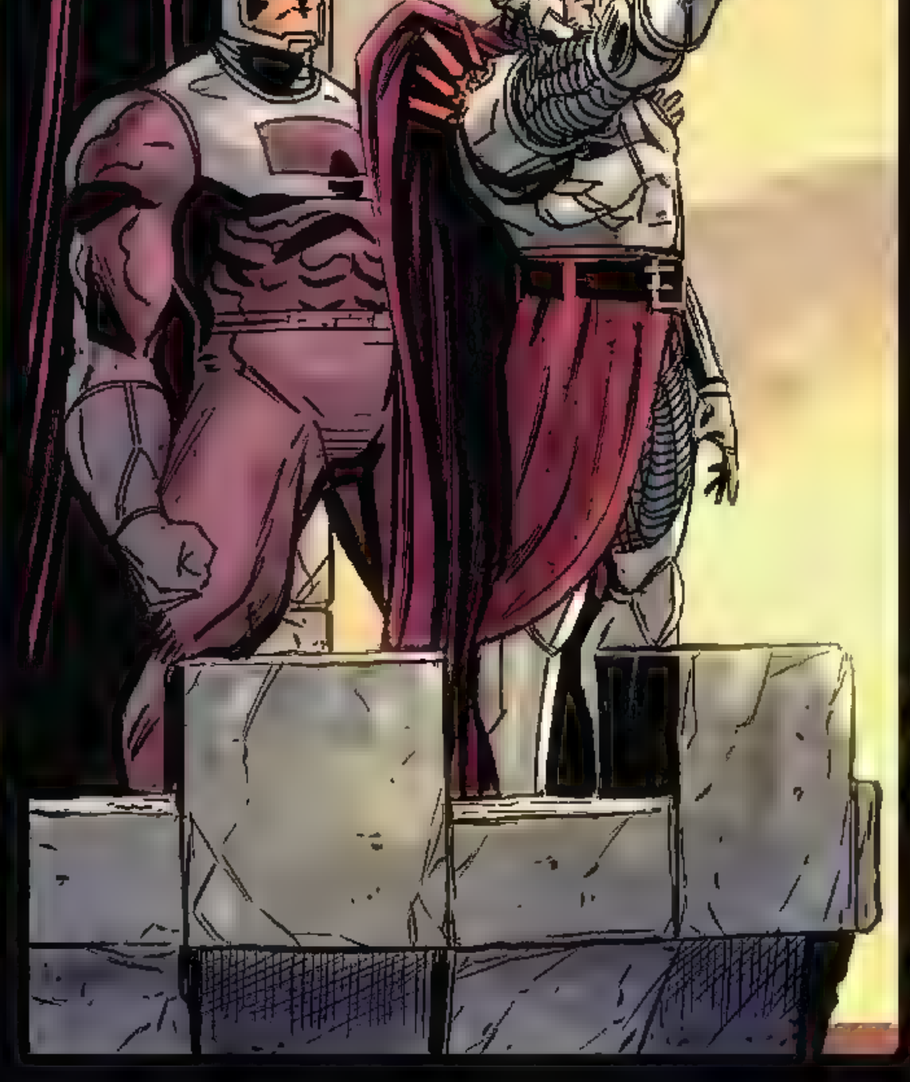




DAY 5.

DAY 6.

You are hereby summoned to the
Coronation
and
Royal Celebration
of
Kristoff Vernard's
Ascendency to the Throne of Latveria
Friday, the 23rd. The Castle Doom.



DAY 8.

DAY 14.

DAY 20.

To Do

TO DO LIST:

FIND POTENTIAL REPLACEMENTS:

- SHE-HULK
- STORM
- BLACK PANTHER
- WYATT WINGFOOT
- ALEX POWER
- LUKE CAGE
- IRON FIST

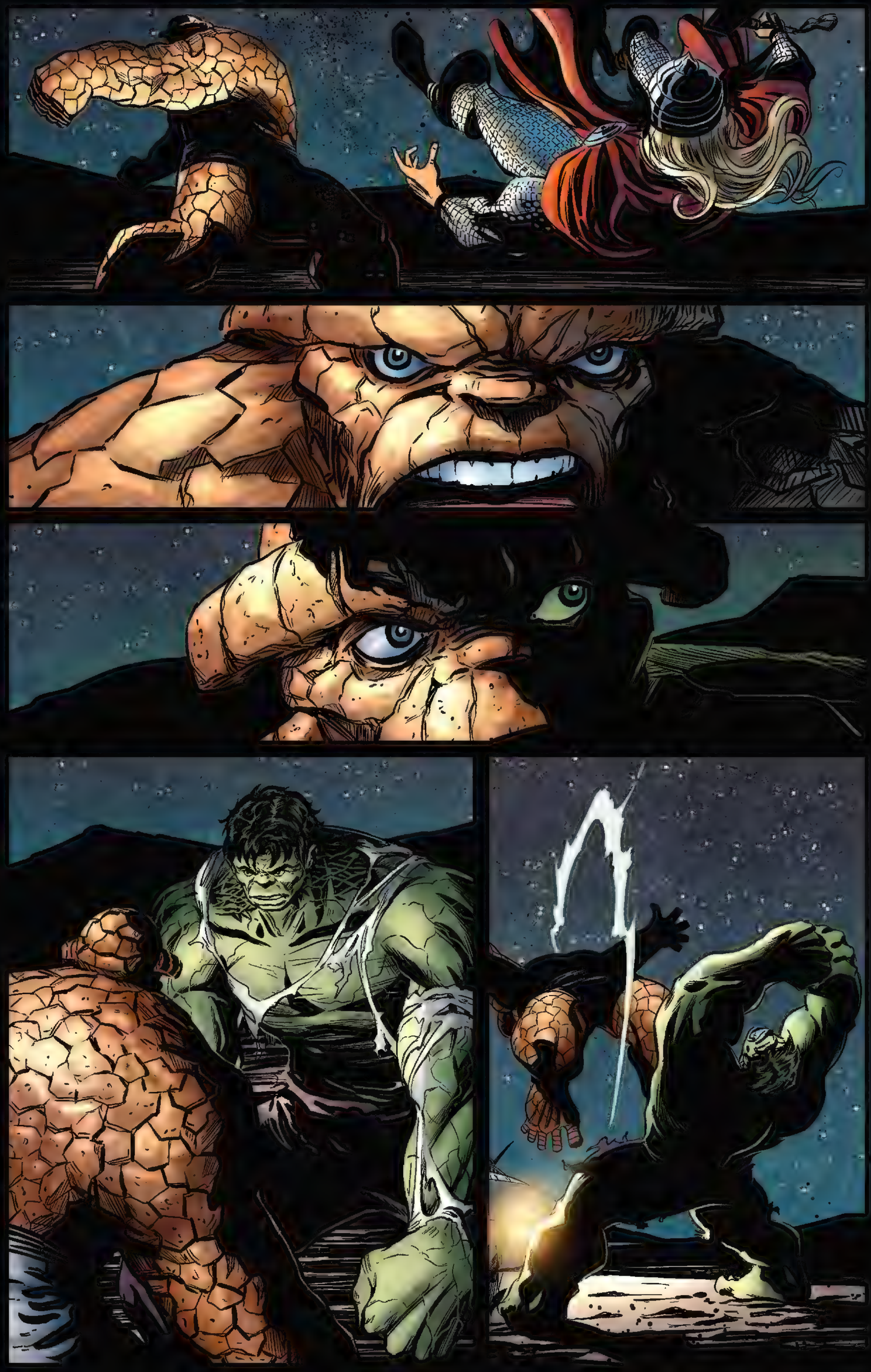
FIND POTENTIAL REPLACEMENTS:

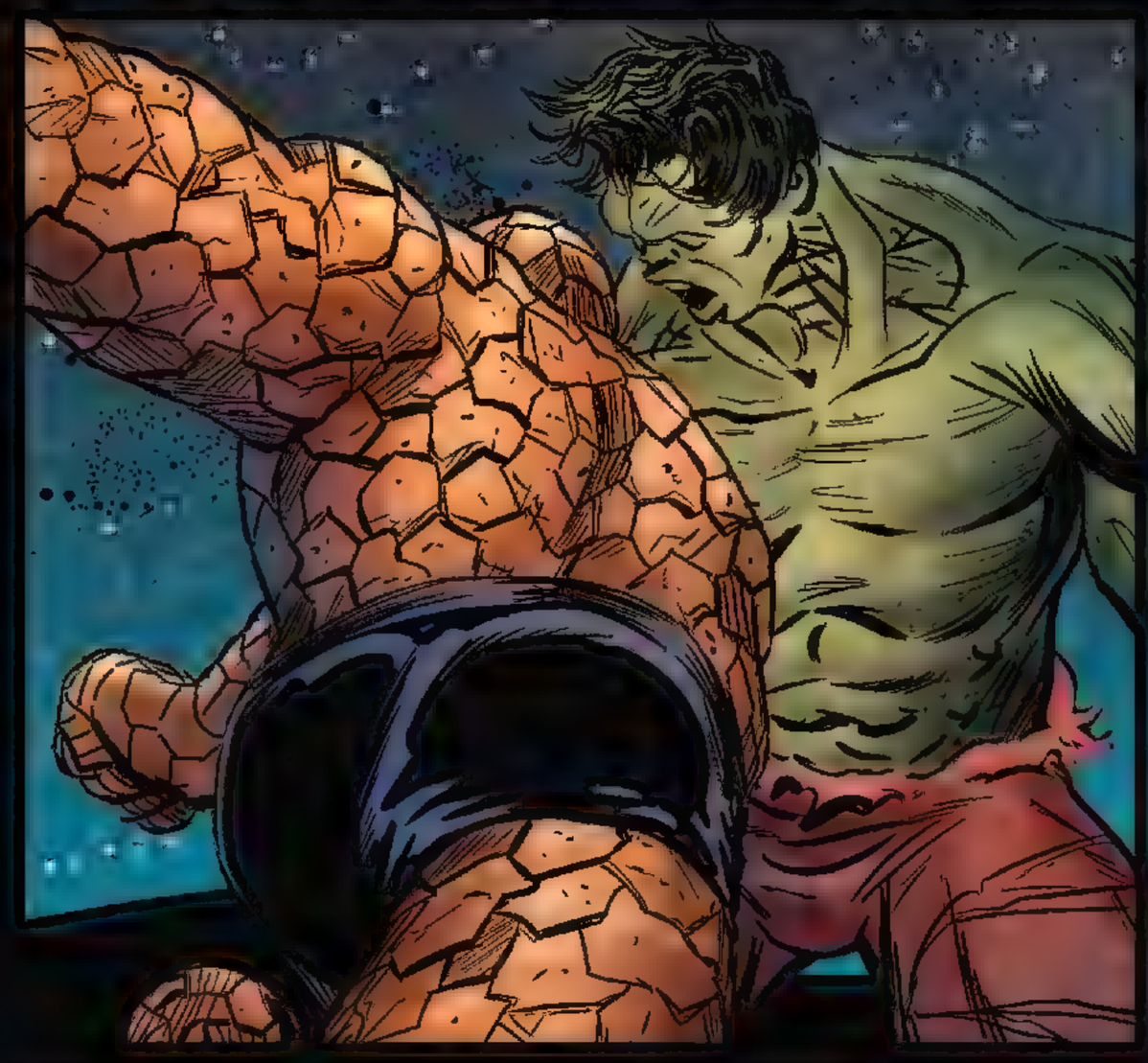
- SHE
- ST
- BLACK
- WYATT WIN
- ALEX POWER
- KE CAGE
- T

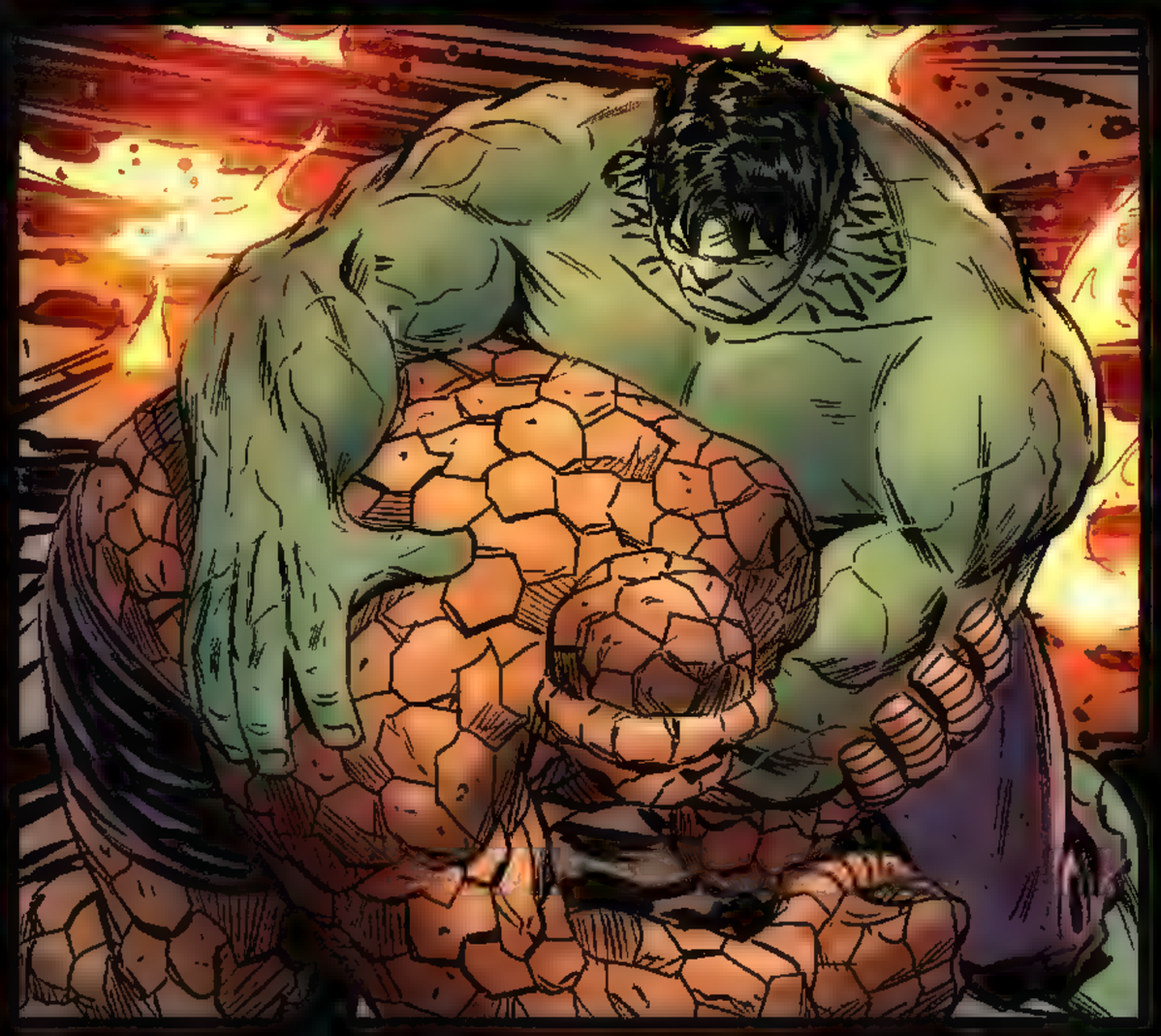
TO DO LIST

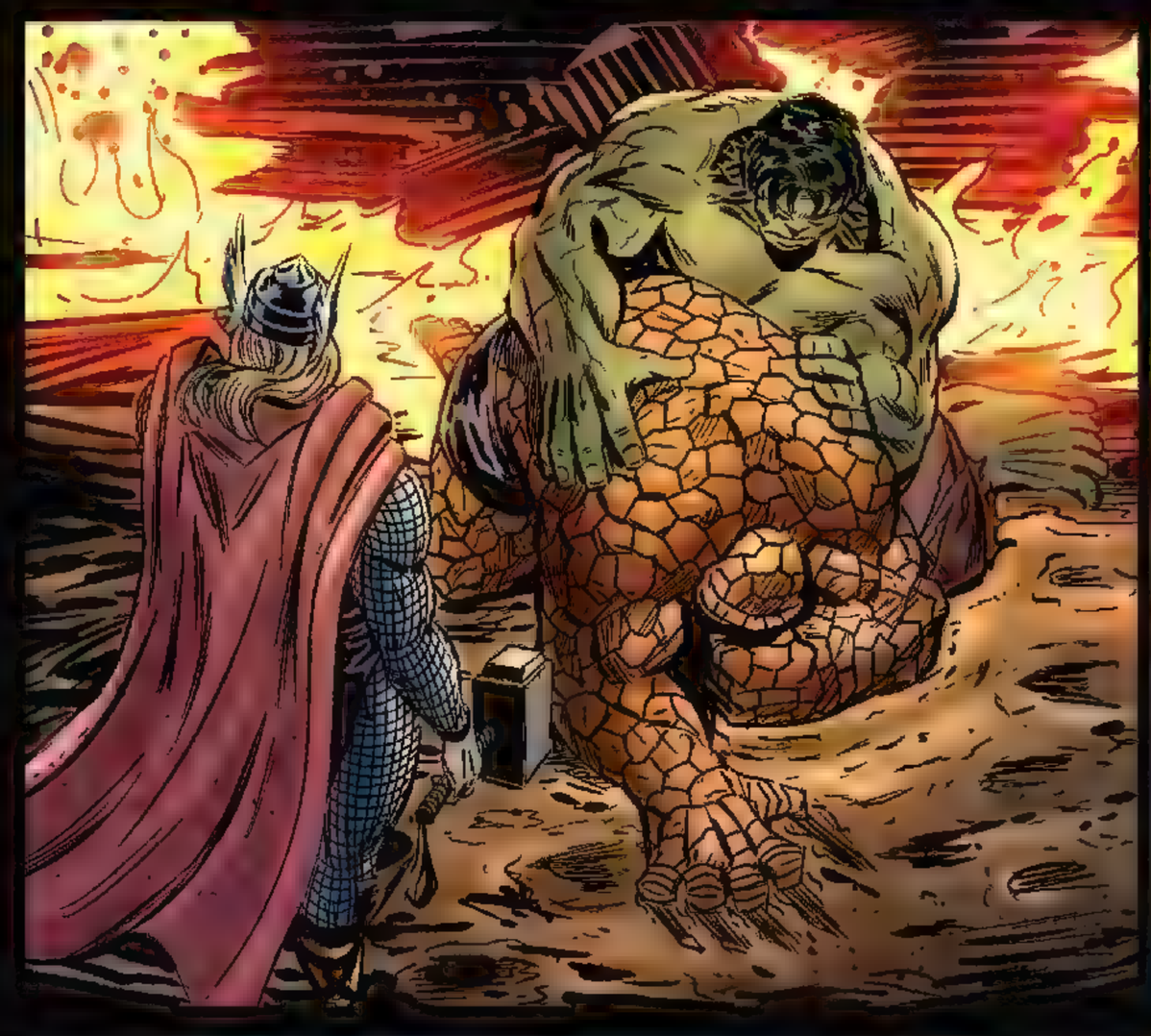
KILL ANNIHILUS

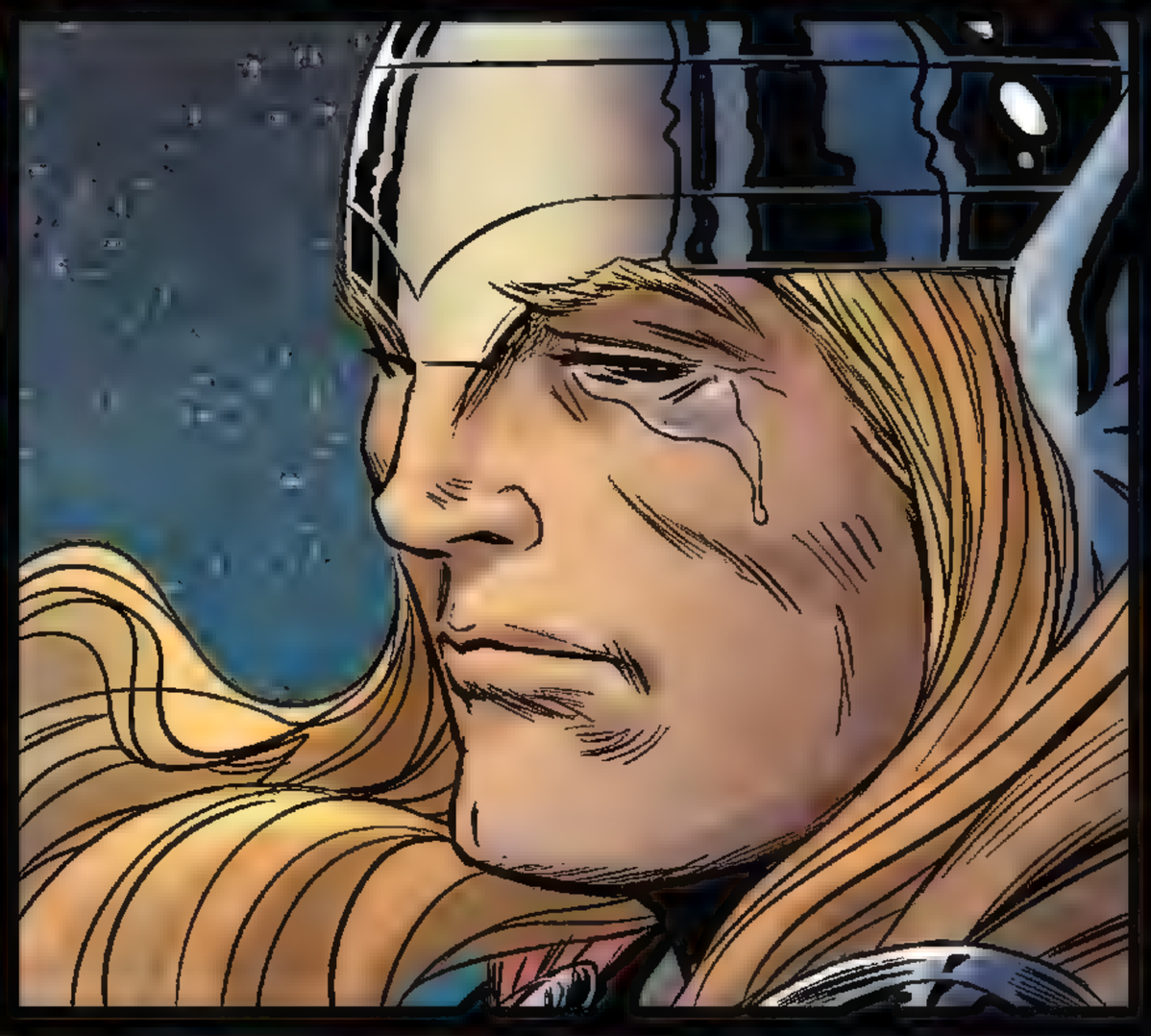
DAY 26.

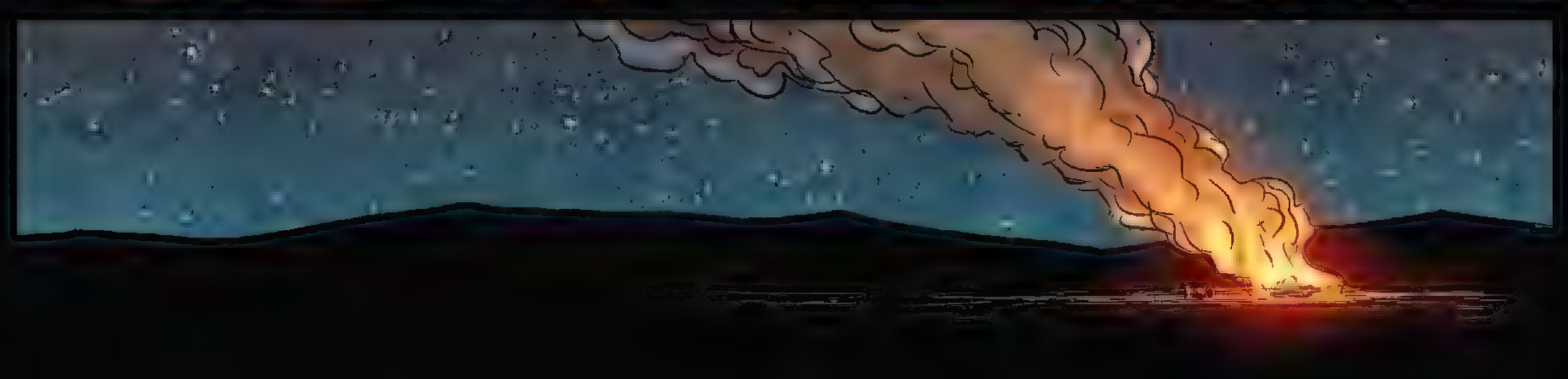












DAY 29.

LIST

INVASION FROM THE NEGATIVE ZONE
INVASION FROM UNIVERSAL INHUMANS
CELESTIAL INVASION VIA BRIDGE
FRANKLIN POWER SET

THREAT LEVEL

HIGH
HIGH
MEDIUM
HIGH

LIST
GALACTUS: DESTRUCTION OF EARTH
REFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

THREAT LEVEL
HIGH
NECESSARY

MY GOD...

HELLO, SON...

I'M HOME.

DAY 14.

HEY.

HELLO, FRANKLIN.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN UP HERE?

I DUNNO... A WHILE.

IT'S QUIET.

SURE...

MIND IF I HANG OUT WITH YOU A BIT?

I GUESS NOT.

UNCLE JOHNNY DIED.

YEAH... I KNOW.

I'M VERY SORRY ABOUT THAT...

SO...UH, HOW'RE YOU DOING WITH ALL THAT?

NOT SO GOOD--I CAN'T SLEEP...I KEEP HAVING BAD THOUGHTS.

WHAT DO YOU SAY WE CLEAR OUR HEADS?

YEAH... YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

DID YOU EAT LUNCH YET?

I'M NOT REALLY HUNGRY.

WELL, I'M STARVING FOR A HOT DOG, BUT I'M NOT GONNA EAT ONE UNLESS YOU DO.

DON'T MAKE ME BEG.

...OKAY.

ALL RIGHT THEN, TWO DOGS COMIN' UP.

CAN I BORROW A DOLLAR?

GOOD?

UH-HUH.

SEE, I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT...

...AND I DON'T KNOW IF YOUR MOM OR DAD HAVE TOLD YOU THIS OR NOT, BUT WHEN I WAS YOUNGER--NOT YOUR AGE, OLDER, BUT STILL TOO YOUNG--I LOST MY UNCLE AS WELL.

WE WERE VERY CLOSE, LIKE YOU AND JOHNNY WERE.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

NO. WHAT HAPPENED?

HE WAS KILLED IN A ROBBERY.

I'M SORRY.

ME TOO. AND NOT A DAY GOES BY THAT I DON'T THINK ABOUT HIM--NOT A SINGLE ONE--BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE ME SAD ANYMORE...

I MEAN, SURE, I WISH HE WAS STILL HERE--AND, GOD, DO I MISS HIM--BUT AFTER A WHILE, THE DARK THOUGHTS, THE BAD ONES LIKE YOU'RE HAVING NOW WILL FADE AWAY AND YOU'LL SPEND MOST OF YOUR TIME THINKING ABOUT HOW MUCH FUN YOU HAD TOGETHER OR HOW MUCH YOU LOVED HIM.

HOW LONG BEFORE THAT HAPPENS?

...IT TAKES A WHILE.

YOU'VE GOT KETCHUP ON YOUR FACE.

THANKS.

CAN I TELL YOU A SECRET, SPIDER-MAN?

OF COURSE YOU CAN.

I THINK I COULD'VE STOPPED UNCLE JOHNNY FROM DYING.

WELL, I PROMISE I'LL KEEP IT TO MYSELF. CAN I TELL YOU ONE?

UH-HUH.

I *KNOW* I COULD'VE STOPPED MY UNCLE FROM DYING.

REALLY?

REALLY.

....

WHY DIDN'T YOU?

BECAUSE I WAS YOUNG. BECAUSE I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT EVERY SINGLE DECISION WE MAKE IS...

BECAUSE I HAD TO LEARN THAT WHEN YOU HAVE GIFTS LIKE OURS, YOU DON'T THINK ABOUT YOURSELF FIRST-- YOU THINK ABOUT HOW LUCKY YOU ARE TO HAVE THEM, AND HOW MUCH OTHER PEOPLE NEED HELP...

IT'S WHAT MY UNCLE WOULD'VE WANTED FROM ME, AND IT'S WHAT YOUR UNCLE JOHNNY WOULD WANT FROM YOU....

UNDERSTAND?

YEAH.

GOOD.

NOW, HOP ON...I NEED TO GET YOU HOME.

HEY, SPIDER-MAN...

YES?

WHAT WAS YOUR UNCLE'S NAME?

HIS NAME WAS BEN.

UNCLES

FUTURE FOUNDATION

VOL ONE TOMORROW

SO THIS IS TOMORROW

D-D-D-DR. FORSON, ARE YOU SURE THAT B-B-BREAKING AWAY FROM THE OTHERS IS THE RUH-RIGHT WAY TO GO?

THAT STENCH YOU SMELL IS STAGNATION, DR. JEMA. OUR BROTHERS AT *A.I.M.* HAVE LOST THEIR NERVE...

AND FOR TOO LONG ***WE*** HAD LOST OUR WAY.

B-B-B-BUT...

NO, NO...

DO NOT FEAR A FUNDAMENTAL REORDERING OF THINGS, ROBERT.

ALL DEATH LEADS TO REBIRTH.

WE MUST ***BEGIN AGAIN.***

EVERYONE! PREPARE FOR SPATIAL TUNNELING...

WE HAVE TO FIND SOME ***NEW IDEAS.***

THE HUMAN TORCH HAS DIED.
THE FANTASTIC FOUR IS NO MORE.
WELCOME TO TOMORROW.
WELCOME TO THE FUTURE FOUNDATION.

THE BAXTER BUILDING.

PLAY IT AGAIN.

...IF YOU'RE WATCHING THIS, GUYS, IT MEANS I'M DEAD.

WHICH SUCKS, BUT REGARDLESS, THERE ARE A COUPLE THINGS I WANT YOU GUYS TO KNOW.

THERE ARE A HUNDRED GOOD REASONS WHY--THE WORLD, OUR FRIENDS, THE KIDS--BUT YOU CAN'T STOP DOING WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING. YOU HAVE TO PUSH HARDER THAN EVER.

IGNORE HOW THINGS ARE. IGNORE HOW THEY SEEM.

MAKE THE WORLD BETTER.

OH, AND I HOPE YOU'LL TAKE MY SUGGESTION AND GIVE PETER MY SPOT ON THE TEAM.

FRANKLIN WOULD LOVE IT, AND SPIDER-MAN IS, AFTER ALL, LIKE THE SECOND-BEST SUPER HERO, EVER.

ALWAYS REMEMBER WHAT YOU STAND FOR.

...I LOVE YOU GUYS.

ALL RIGHT, JOHNNY...ALL RIGHT.

SO THIS IS TOMORROW.

HRMPH.

I THOUGHT THERE'D BE A DOOR.

OH, THERE IS...

YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOW WHERE TO LOOK.

WELL? THE ENTRANCE IS WIDE OPEN, YOUNG MAN... YOU COMING *IN?*

YOU BET.

SO... HOW'S YOUR AUNT BEEN, PETER?

SHE'S FINE... AUNT MAY'S FINE.

WOW.

AS I'M SURE YOU'VE GUESSED...

THINGS HAVE *CHANGED.*

"THIS PAST MONTH HAS SEEN REED'S DAD, NATHANIEL, FIND HIS WAY HOME AFTER BEING LOST IN TIME.

"FATHER AND SON FINALLY REUNITED AFTER DECADES OF BEING APART.

"NATHANIEL ALSO APPARENTLY KNOWS SOME OF WHAT LIES AHEAD...THAT, ALONG WITH ALL THAT REED AND THE SCIENCE KIDS ARE ACCOMPLISHING, SEEMS TO REALLY PUT THE POINT ON WHAT WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS AROUND HERE."

THE FUTURE FOUNDATION IS ABOUT CHANGING THE WORLD, PETER. FOREVER.

YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE IT.

"AS FOR ME...EVENTS HAVE LED ME TO ASSUME FULL CONTROL AS REGENT OF OLD ATLANTIS."

BETWEEN THAT AND THE REGULAR FREAK OCCURRENCES THAT CONSTITUTE OUR NORMAL FAMILY BUSINESS, IT'S KEEPING ME SUPER BUSY...

WHICH IS A GOOD AND MUCH NEEDED THING.

BECAUSE I DON'T THINK ANYONE AROUND HERE WANTS TO BE ALONE WITH THEIR THOUGHTS RIGHT NOW.

HEY! BEN!

WHAT ARE YOU...

WHAM!

SUSAN, MAYBE I SHOULDN'T...

NO. JUST LIKE THE REST OF US, BEN WANTS YOU HERE.

THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU...

"HE BLAMES HIMSELF.

"COME ON...THERE'S SOMETHING WAITING FOR YOU IN YOUR ROOM."

OKAY, I GOTTA TELL YOU, THIS IS NOT WHAT I WAS EXPECTING.

I'LL ADMIT, IT'S A BIT OF A CHANGE.

SO WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BLUE... WITH THE FOUR...

...AND THE LITTLE CIRCLE THING?

I WAS IN THE MOOD FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

THE OTHER... SEEMED WRONG.

AND IT CERTAINLY FEELS LIKE A BLACK AND WHITE WORLD RIGHT NOW, DOESN'T IT?

BESIDES, IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, YOU CAN CHANGE IT ANYTIME YOU WANT.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN I CAN...*HUH?*

THE SUITS ARE MADE OF THIRD GENERATION UNSTABLE MOLECULES. THERE ARE DEFAULT SETTINGS, BUT YOU CAN CREATE VARIATIONS ON EACH THEME BY CONCENTRATING.

COOL.

ALERT: LEVEL 5 THREAT.

INCIDENT UNDERWAY AT THE P.A.V.L.O.V. FACILITY.

UH, WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

IT MEANS IT'S TIME TO GO TO WORK.

DOWN THE DARKEST HOLE.
P.A.V.L.O.V.

SECURE THIS AREA.
RETRIEVE THE OBJECTIVE.

WE CANNOT GO ANY F-F-F-FURTHER. THE INNER RUH-RING IS TOO HEAVILY SH-SH-SHIELDED.
WE'LL HAVE TO CUT THROUGH FROM H-H-HERE.
PROCEED.

FFFSSSSSHHHHHHHH

SSSSHHHHHHHHHH

IS THAT THE FLUTTERING OF ANGEL'S WINGS I HEAR?

15 MINUTES LATER.

NOTHING. I'M GETTING NO RESPONSE FROM THE P.A.V.L.O.V. SECURITY TEAM.

ARE WE TOO LATE?

I'LL GIVE YOU ONE GUESS...

I'M GOIN'.

TRY AN' KEEP UP...

SO...YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HANDLE THESE GUYS YOURSELF?

I DON'T MUCH FEEL LIKE JOKIN', WEB-HEAD...

RIGHT NOW, I JUST WANNA BREAK SOMETHIN'.

CRASH!

KER-BOOOM

RUMMMBLE

A LITTLE MORE URGENCY NOW, DOCTOR.

W-W-W-W-WE'RE THERE.

SEE, I PRAYED AND I PRAYED...

ADORATION FROM ON MY KNEES...

DO YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS FOR THE FAITHFUL?

DELIVERANCE.

WE'VE PUSHED THEM INTO THE HIGH SECURITY WING.

THEY SEEM TO BE DEFENDING...

OH, NO... BENTLEY.

WE HAVE TO *HURRY*.

THEY'RE TRYING TO FREE THE WIZARD.

MY GOD.

YES, RICHARDS... YES! DO YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED?

GOD BROUGHT THE WALLS DOWN!

TIME TO GO.

WRECK THIS PLACE.

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

SUSAN! THEY'RE GOING TO DETONATE...

I'VE GOT IT.

ZZZZZZZZZGHHRRMMMMMMMM

YOU HAVE SOMETHING OF MINE, RICHARDS...

I'LL BE COMING FOR IT SOON.

BOOOM

THAT'S GONNA BE A PROBLEM, AIN'T IT?

UNDOUBTEDLY.

GREAT.

SO IS THERE ANYTHING POSITIVE WE CAN TAKE FROM MY FIRST DAY ON THE JOB?

I'M PRETTY SURE DAD'S MAKING ROAST.

THE BAXTER BUILDING. LATER.

DINNER'S READY!

SMELLS REAL GOOD, MR. RICHARDS.

I'M GLAD YOU APPROVE, BENJAMIN.

WE CAN'T HAVE YOU BOYS GOING HUNGRY, NOW CAN WE?

MAYBE. I'M WATCHIN' MY FIGURE.

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, I'M STARVING.

SPIDER-MAN! YOU CAN'T SIT THERE.

WHAT?

THAT'S NOT YOUR SEAT.

JOHNNY ALWAYS SAT THERE.

AH, OKAY...SORRY, FRANKLIN, WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

ALEX, WILL YOU DO THE HONORS?

OF COURSE.

DEAR GOD...

OR OTHER SIMILAR JUDEO-CHRISTIAN MESSIANIC FIGURE...

OR THE ANCIENT ONES...

OR SOME WEIRD EVOLUTIONARY SOMETHING-OR-OTHER...

BLESS THE MACHINE AND THIS CARCASS WE ARE ABOUT TO EAT,

BLESS THE BUBBLE AND THE LIFE THAT LIVES WITHIN.

MAY THEIR ADVANCEMENT TRANSFORM THE WORLD.

MAY THIS MEAL BE REALLY FREAKING TASTY.

MURGLE. MURGLE

OR SOME RANDOM CONFLUENCE OF EVENTS THAT RESULTED IN THE PERFECT CONDITIONS FOR LIFE TO FLOURISH ON THIS ONCE-BARREN, DESOLATE HUNK OF ROCK...

WE THANK YOU FOR...

AHEM.

OH, RIGHT... OR MEPHISTO, THE DEVIL, OR SOME OTHER EVIL INCARNATE BEING...

HELL YES.

...WE THANK YOU FOR THIS WONDERFUL DINNER.

AMEN.

SO, I'VE BEEN THINKING...

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO EVENTUALLY DO SOMETHING REGARDING THE INHUMANS... MAYBE WE SHOULD BE THINKING BIGGER.

HOW DO YOU GUYS FEEL ABOUT US TERRAFORMING THE MOON?

COOL.

IF YOU THINK THAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

SOUNDS GREAT.

WELL, I THINK THAT'S A *TERRIBLE* IDEA.

WHAT, WE DON'T DO DISSENTING OPINIONS HERE?

REED JUST NORMALLY SAYS SOMETHING AND EVERYONE AUTOMATICALLY AGREES?

THAT'S RIDICULOUS.

HOW REFRESHING.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME, DAD.

CLEAN YOUR PLATE, SON.

LATER.

AWWWWWW!

YOU HAVE TO LOOK FOR THE PATTERN, FRANKLIN.

PAT-TERN!

THE GAME'S PROGRAMED, SO IT'S IN THERE SOMEWHERE...IT MAY BE SIMPLE, PROBABLY COMPLEX, BUT ONCE YOU FIND IT, YOU CAN WIN EVERY TIME.

YEAH, DAD, BUT WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT?

GIVE IT ANOTHER TRY.

DAD. THERE'S SOMETHING GRANDPA AND I HAVE TO RUN BY YOU.

YEAH?

WE NEED TO TALK, SON.

YOU DID WHAT!?!

WHAT WAS NECESSARY.

DON'T TELL ME THAT. HOW COULD YOU PROMISE--

IT'S WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO, DAD.

YOUNG LADY, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE VERY GIFTED...I SYMPATHIZE.

BUT, VAL, IF YOU THINK I WON'T COMPLETELY CUT YOU OFF FROM ALL THIS IMMEDIATELY, YOU'RE FOOLING YOURSELF.

YOU *DO NOT* HAVE CARTE BLANCHE TO DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.

REED.

WHAT?

IT'S WHAT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO DO.

I KNOW IT.

=SIGH=

FATHER, JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN TO THE FUTURE DOESN'T MEAN WE ARE TIED TO ONE SPECIFIC PLAN YOU BELIEVE WILL ENSURE THE BEST TOMORROW...

YOU DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING. NO ONE DOES.

THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT AREN'T WORTH THE RISK.

"BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY."

WHO LIVES LIKE THAT?

WHEN I WAS HER AGE, WAS I...

EVEN WORSE.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

BUT, DAD, THIS--

I KNOW... I *KNOW*--BUT WE'RE GOING TO NEED HIM.

THE OTHERS WILL LOOK TO YOU. THEY'LL WANT TO SEE HOW YOU HANDLE IT. THEY'LL NEED TO SEE THAT YOU'RE FINE WITH THIS.

I'M *NOT* FINE WITH IT--I'M NOT FINE *AT ALL.* BUT IF YOU ARE SURE IT'S BEST, I CAN *ACCEPT* IT.

FOR NOW.

I KNEW YOU'D SEE THIS WAS THE BEST THING TO DO...

HEY... HEAR THAT, UNCLE DOOM?

WELCOME TO THE CLUB.

THE FIRST FAMILY

	Name	Description
01.	Reed Richards	Mister Fantastic. The head of the family.
02.	Susan Richards	The Invisible Woman. Force-field projection. Sister to the fallen Johnny Storm.
03.	Ben Grimm	The Thing. Reed's best friend since college. A man trapped in a monster's body.
04.	Peter Parker	The Amazing Spider-Man. Super hero.
05.	Franklin Richards	The son of Reed and Susan. Will one day be the most powerful mutant on Earth.
06.	Valeria Richards	The daughter of Reed and Susan. Super-intellect.
07.	Nathaniel Richards	Reed's long-lost father now returned home. A time traveller, and the only Nathaniel remaining in the multiverse.
08.	Leech	The best friend and roommate of Franklin Richards. A mutant with the power to negate another mutant's power.
09.	Victor Von Doom	Doctor Doom. Super villain and long-time foe of the Fantastic Four.

THE FUTURE FOUNDATION

	Name	Description
01.	Reed Richards	Mister Fantastic. Headmaster and creator of the Future Foundation.
04.	Peter Parker	The Spectacular Spider-Man. Super-scientist.
06.	Valeria Richards	The daughter of Reed and Susan. Trouble.
10.	Alex Power	Eldest of the Power clan known as Power Pack. Has the ability to control gravity.
11.	Bentley 23	A child clone of Bentley Wittman, the Wizard. Genius, and ward of Reed Richards.
12.	Dragon Man	An android brought to life by the villain Diablo, now reprogrammed for peace.
13.	Artie Maddicks	A problem-solver. Has the ability to holographically project his thoughts.
14.	Wu	Male co-heir to the Ul-Uhari throne at the Peak. Ward of Susan Richards.
15.	Vii	Female co-heir to the Ul-Uhari throne at the Peak. Ward of Susan Richards.
16.	Mik	The smartest Moloid survivor from the Forever City of the High Evolutionary.
17.	Korr	The youngest Moloid survivor from the Forever City of the High Evolutionary.
18.	Turg	The oldest Moloid survivor from the Forever City of the High Evolutionary.
19.	Tong	A floating head, former herald to long-term foe of the Fantastic Four, the Mole Man.

DOOM IS REBORN

YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME!

I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE UPSET. THE OTHERS--*SUSAN*--REACTED THE SAME WAY...

BUT LET ME EXPLAIN.

WHADDYA GONNA SAY, REED?

YOU GONNA GIVE ME *SOME KINDA* REASON WHY I SHOULDN'T--

OH, IF IT'S INSIGHT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, GRIMM...

...SURELY, DOOM CAN OFFER ENLIGHTENMENT.

IF YOU THINK I'M GONNA SIT BY AND...

BEN... PLEASE!...IT'S NOT WHAT IT SEEMS.

IS IT TRUE WHAT I'VE HEARD, BENJAMIN?

THAT WHEN JOHNNY STORM DIED--VALIANTLY FACING AN ENDLESS ARMY...

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU-- SURROUNDED BY CRYING CHILDREN-- WEEPING AT THE INEVITABLE DEATH OF YOUR CLOSE COMRADE AND FRIEND...

IS IT TRUE?

SHUT UP, VICTOR.

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU JUST... WATCHED?

HOW VERY BRAVE.

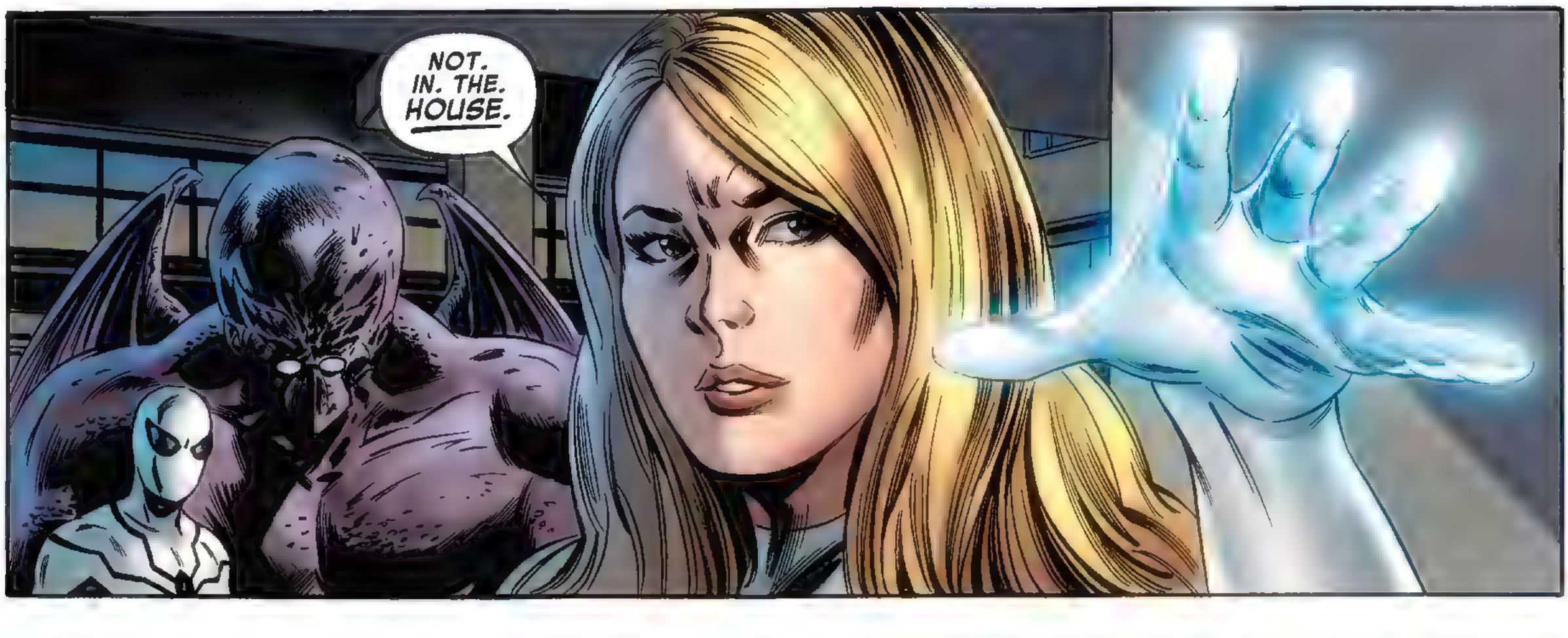
RRAAAARRR!

WELL... IS THAT ALL?

I'M GONNA RIP YOUR STINKIN'...

BEN!

NO!


NOT.
IN. THE.
HOUSE.

THANK YOU, DEAR.

UH-HUH. SOMEONE WANT TO EXPLAIN WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON? I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S GOIN' ON.

A CERTAIN BAND OF KNOW-IT-ALLS HAS DECIDED TO ASK UGLY OVER THERE TO JOIN THE TEAM...

DOOM'S MOVIN' IN, SUSIE.

THAT'S MY FAULT, UNCLE BEN...

THERE'S SOMETHING THAT I...WELL, ACTUALLY, WE NEED UNCLE DOOM TO DO.

CONSIDER THAT NOW MIGHT BE A TIME WHEN IT IS BEST TO KEEP HIM CLOSE, BENJAMIN.

YEAH? WELL CONSIDER THAT NOW MAYBE I DON'T WANNA BE HERE.

C'MON, DRAGON-- YOU'RE WITH ME.

OUR DESTINATION?

THE CLOSEST BAR. AND THE FIRST ONE'S ON ME.

I'M AN ANDROID, MR. GRIMM...I DON'T DRINK.

FINE. YOU BUY.

SUSAN, YOU SHOULD GO WITH THEM...MAYBE TRY TO HELP BEN UNDERSTAND.

OH, THAT IS GOING TO BE A PROBLEM, REED... AS I HAPPEN TO AGREE WITH HIM.

FOR A COLLECTION OF BRILLIANT MINDS, YOU ALL SEEM TO BE STRUGGLING TO USE YOUR THUMBS ON THIS ONE.

YOU REALLY THINK YOU'VE THOUGHT THIS THROUGH?

THIS MOMENT, NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MY RESTORATION.

NOT YOU, SUSAN...AND CERTAINLY NOT HOW YOU FEEL.

DON'T *PUSH ME*, VICTOR.

I COULD ALWAYS DO A LITTLE MORE DAMAGE UP THERE. A COUPLE OF STRATEGICALLY PLACED AIR BUBBLES IN YOUR BRAIN AND YOU'LL BE REDUCED TO A DROOLING HOUSE PET.

IF YOU'RE GOOD MAYBE I'D FEED YOU FROM THE TABLE.

I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, REED.

SO...I GUESS SOMEONE IS SLEEPING ON THE COUCH TONIGHT.

YOU WANT ME TO GO WITH HER...OR STAY... OR...

I COULD DO EITHER.

ACTUALLY, I'D LIKE FOR YOU TO STAY HERE, SPIDER-MAN... WE CAN ALWAYS USE A FRESH PERSPECTIVE IN THE ROOM.

THE ROOM?

UH-HUH...

THE ROOM.

HAVE A SEAT, VICTOR.

OKAY, CLASS...

THIS IS VICTOR VON DOOM. HE HAS RECENTLY SUFFERED MASSIVE BRAIN DAMAGE...

TODAY'S PROBLEM IS FOR US TO FIND A WAY TO RETURN THE SUBJECT TO HIS PREVIOUS STATE...

IMPERFECT AS IT WAS.

UMM, SHOULD WE EVEN BE DOING THIS...THAT'S *DOCTOR DOOM, MAN!*

YES, *THE* DOCTOR DOOM.

WE SHOULD *TOTALLY* BE DOING THIS.

EH...ETHICS ASIDE, DON'T YOU NEED TO DETERMINE WHETHER WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A STRUCTURAL ISSUE--ACTUAL PHYSICAL DAMAGE--OR A DATA ISSUE...

YOU KNOW, IS THE BRAIN BIOLOGICALLY SOUND, BUT IT JUST NOW LACKS LARGE CHUNKS OF MISSING...

WHY IS EVERYONE LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?

UNEXPECTED. THE SPIDER-MAN ALSO POSSESSES A FORMIDABLE INTELLECT.

IMPRESSIVE.

I DON'T LIKE HIM.

I DON'T CARE. HIS QUESTION REMAINS VALID...

DO WE KNOW THE ANSWER?

ACTUALLY, WE DO. VICTOR'S BRAIN APPEARS TO BE STRUCTURALLY SOUND.

WELL THEN, THIS SEEMS TO BE A PRETTY STRAIGHT-FORWARD PROBLEM WITH A SIMPLE ANSWER.

THIS IS JUST A STANDARD DATA RETRIEVAL SCENARIO...

SO WHAT WE NEED IS A BACKUP OF DOOM'S BRAIN.
OH...
OH, VAL...HOW ELEGANT.
HOW DID I NOT THINK OF THAT.
DAD... YOU'VE BEEN A BIT DISTRACTED.
YES, WELL... DID YOU HEAR THAT, VICTOR?
HMMMM.
I SAID WE NEED A BACKUP.
HMMM... YES. A BACKUP.
YEAH, EXACTLY.
I SAID WE NEED A BACKUP.

CHILD, YOU ARE TRYING DOOM'S PATIENCE.

I SAID WE NEED A BACKUP.

KRISTOFF.

MUK'S BAR

SO, STRETCH SENT YOU AFTER ME?

UH-HUH.

THE LOOK YOU GOT ON YOUR FACE, I THINK I AIN'T THE ONLY ONE UNHAPPY HERE.

YOUR LIBATIONS ARE SERVED.

THANKS, DRAGON.

WHAT IS IT YOU THINK WE SHOULD DO ABOUT IT, BEN?

I DUNNO...HOW ABOUT THE THREE OF US HEAD BACK TO THE BAXTER BUILDIN' AND POUND OL' DOOM INTO NEXT WEEK?

ACTUALLY, MR. GRIMM. I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO COUNT ME OUT.

IS THAT SO?

IT IS.

UNLESS I'M ATTACKED AND FORCED TO DEFEND MYSELF, OR DEFEND THOSE THAT I CARE ABOUT--TAKE OUR RECENT SITUATION REGARDING THE NEGATIVE ZONE, FOR EXAMPLE--I'VE REACHED A PLACE WHERE I NO LONGER SEE AGGRESSIVE PHYSICAL ACTION AS A PRACTICAL SOLUTION TO ANY PROBLEM.

UH... WHADDYA SAYIN' EXACTLY?

WELL, TO BE CLEAR, I'VE SWORN OFF VIOLENCE.

NO ONE'S EVER CHANGED THE WORLD BY HITTING SOMEONE, MR. GRIMM.

SLAM!

I THINK I NEED ANOTHER ONE.

I'M GETTIN' TIRED OF FEELIN' LIKE I'M SECOND FIDDLE TO A BUNCHA KNOW-IT-ALL EGGHEADS.

THERE'S NO DENYING OUR WORLD KEEPS CHANGING AROUND US, BEN.

MAYBE BOTH OF US SHOULD SPEND SOME TIME FIGURING OUT OUR PLACES IN IT.

SUSIE, I SWEAR...

RIGHT NOW, I DON'T THINK EITHER ONE OF US HAS ANY IDEA WHERE THAT IS.

LATVERIA.
THE NEXT DAY.

TCHSSS

WELCOME HOME, FATHER.

"IT WAS DURING AN ATTEMPTED COUP THAT KRISTOFF VERNARD WAS ORPHANED.

"AFTER THE INSURRECTION AGAINST HIM WAS PUT DOWN, VICTOR PLACED KRISTOFF UNDER HIS PERSONAL PROTECTION--RAISING HIM AS HIS OWN SON.

"DOOM NAMED KRISTOFF HIS HEIR.

"SHORTLY AFTER THAT, CERTAIN PROTOCOLS WERE ENACTED.

"IF EVER THE MASTER SHOULD FALL, THE BOY WOULD IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE HIS INHERITANCE--A FULL PORTION OF DOOM.

"ALL THE KNOWLEDGE... ALL THE MEMORIES... NOW HIS SON'S."

SUCH A DAY CAME, AND NOW A BACKUP OF DOOM EXISTS WITHIN KRISTOFF'S HEAD...SO WE'RE GOING TO REVERSE THE PROCESS AND REPAIR VICTOR.

UNDERSTAND?

OH...I *GOT IT.*

AND I DON'T SEE HOW *ANYTHING* COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG HERE.

SIRE, ARE YOU SURE THIS IS OUR BEST COURSE OF ACTION?

IT IS ALL WE HAVE, KRISTOFF.

FATHER...NO ONE WANTS YOU WHOLE MORE THAN I...BUT THIS TIME WE WILL BE OVERWRITING *YOU* WITH *ME.*

I HAVE NOT BEEN PERFECT.

I HAVE FAILED MANY TIMES.

I AM NO DOOM.

HEY! DON'T WORRY, MISTER KRISTOFF.

WE'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOING TO COPY OVER EVERYTHING...JUST THE PARTS THAT NEED FIXING.

VICTOR'S DAMAGE IS CONFINED TO TWO SPECIFIC AREAS OF HIS BRAIN: THE CORPUS CALLOSUM AND HIS CEREBRAL CORTEX...

WHICH EXPLAINS HIS REDUCED INTELLIGENCE AND WHY HE CAN NO LONGER PERFORM THE DARK ARTS.

VERNARD

VON DOOM

VON DOOM

AS SORELY AS IT'S NEEDED, THIS ISN'T GOING TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON HIS PERSONALITY OR GENERAL MAKEUP.

SOON, ALL WILL BE RIGHT.

EXACTLY...

NOW HAVE A SEAT!

OKAY.

WE'RE READY OVER HERE, SON.

ALL RIGHT, EVERYTHING LOOKS FINE OVER HERE AS WELL.

DAD, YOU AND VAL POWER US UP AND THEN INITIATE THE TRANSFER.

I'LL HANDLE COORDINATING THE OVERWRITE.

OKAY... WE'RE POWERING ON.

PROFILE

OVERWRITE

TRANSFER

PURGE

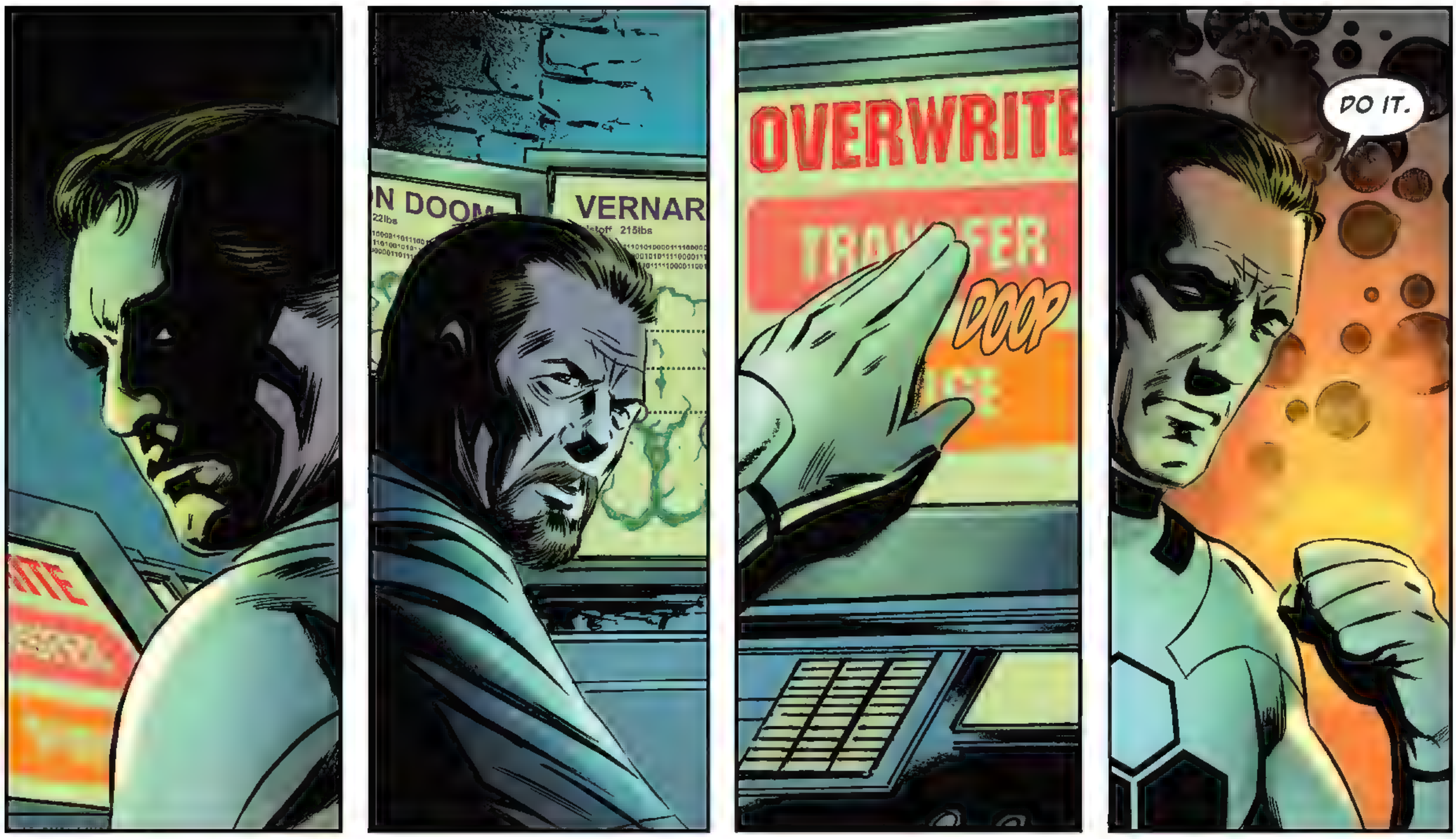
OVERWRIT

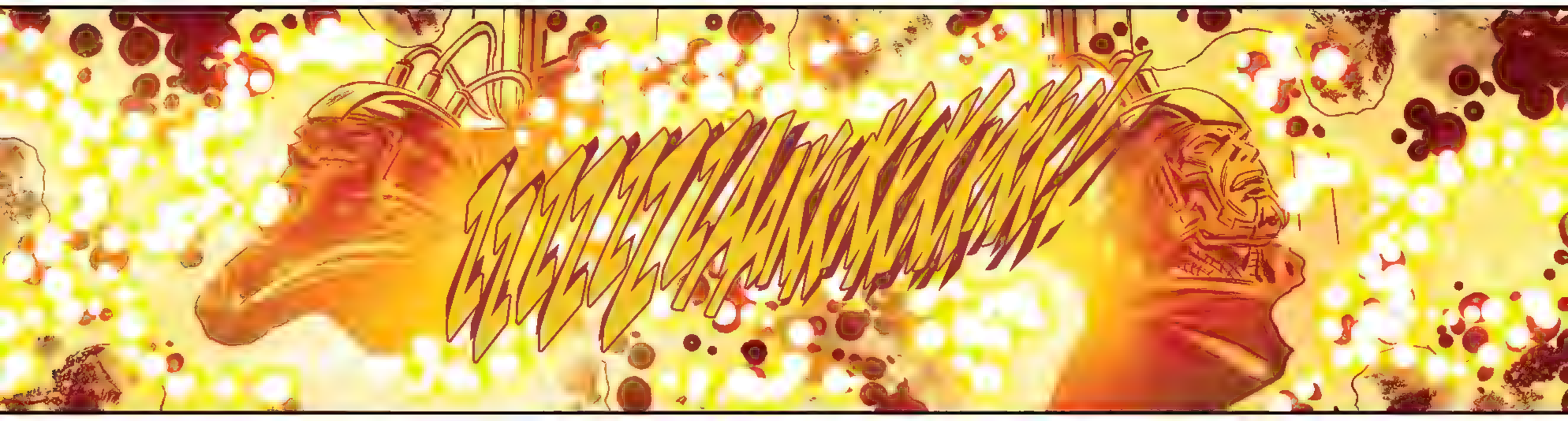
DAD! ARE WE THERE YET?

ALMOST.

OVERWRIT

TRANSFER




EEEEEEAAA

FIRES RELIT, *SCIENCE* AND *MAGIC* REKINDLED...

THE CHAINS OF MERE MORTALITY BROKEN...

FATHER... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

DID IT WORK?

DOOM IS...

REBORN!

WONDERFUL NEWS THEN...

WE MUST SUMMON THE PEOPLE, I WILL RELINQUISH YOUR THRONE IMMEDIATELY.

NO...NOW IS NOT THE TIME.

I MADE A PROMISE TO YOUNG VALERIA.

AND SHE HAS CERTAINLY FULFILLED HER END OF THE BARGAIN.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, VICTOR?

THE TWO OF THEM MADE A DEAL.

WHAT?

WE MADE A DEAL, DADDY.

WE SHOOK ON IT.

YES.

AND WHILE I NOW SUSPECT THAT SHE HAD ALREADY FIGURED OUT A SOLUTION BEFOREHAND, THE SHREWD CHILD DID, IN FACT, RESTORE ME... AND NOW I MUST DO MY PART.

AND WHAT PART IS THAT, VICTOR?

OH...I AGREED TO HELP YOUR DAUGHTER DEFEAT YOU, RICHARDS.

SO LET'S GET ON WITH IT, SHALL WE?

FIND ME
SOMETHING
I CAN
USE

THE BAXTER BUILDING.

SOON THEY WILL RETURN, RICHARDS...

AND WITH THEM SURELY BRING YOUR DOOM.

THE VESSEL OF THE WORLD BUILDER.
THE HOME OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY.
SUMMONED BACK TO EARTH BY THE ACTIVATION OF THE ASCENSION ENGINE.

FASCINATING...

I HAVE TO ADMIT, I'M USED TO UNPREDICTABLE SUCCESS SPRINGING FROM UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES, BUT THIS...

THIS IS SOMETHING... WONDERFUL.

BEHOLD! THE MAKER IS PLEASED.

PLEASED AND OVERJOYED.

BLESS THE MAKER. BLESS THE MACHINE.

AND BLESS THE BEN FOR SALVATION AND PROVIDING THIS GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY!

YEAH, YEAH...

LISTEN, WYNDHAM...IF YOU THINK THAT'S SOMETHIN'...WAIT'LL YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

RUBEDO.
THE HOME OF DIABLO.

WELL... YOU'VE CHANGED.

INDEED. I HAVE BECOME... *SOMETHING MORE.*

FRANKLY, IT'S SOMETHING I NOW BELIEVE EVERY SENTIENT BEING IS CAPABLE OF.

INCLUDING YOU, MY CREATOR...

IT IS WHY I REQUESTED TO BRING THAT TO YOU.

SHOO!

AND I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE *THIS* IS REAL?

LOWER AMDUAT
RESEARCH FACILITY
OF THE MAD THINKER.

AN INVITATION. *AN INVITATION!*

IT'S THE OPENING MOVE OF THE GREATEST OF GAMES--ASK YOURSELF, WHO'S THE OPPONENT, WHAT DOES HE WANT? IS THIS HIS FIRST MOVE, OR SIMPLY AN ORCHESTRATION TO REVEAL WHO HIS REAL OPPONENTS ARE...

OH, SO VERY TRICKY. AN INVITATION...WHAT COULD IT POSSIBLY MEAN?

I THINK IT MEANS YOU'RE INVITED.

MMMMAAHHHH! NO. NO. NO. NO. *NO!*

FOOLISH PAWN. FOOLISH PAWN THAT DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THAT HE'S A PIECE...OH, OH...OR MAYBE YOU'RE SOMETHING MORE. MAYBE SO. YES, MAYBE I CAN USE THIS. YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT EVEN AWARE OF HOW MUCH HE'S GIVEN AWAY BY SENDING YOU...

SO, REVEAL ALL. TELL ME-- AND DON'T TRY AND THINK IT OVER, AS I NEED AN UNTAINTED, PRIMARY RESPONSE--TELL ME, *WHAT SHOULD I DO?*

OH...I WOULD PREFER THAT YOU STAY HOME.

MAYBE TAKE A BATH...

MAYBE BRUSH YOUR TEETH.

THAT'S IT! THAT'S IT-- I ACCEPT THE INVITATION!!

...OF COURSE YOU DO.

OUTLIER ISLAND.
SECRET A.I.M. BASE,
HOME OF THE WIZARD.

PUH-PUH-PUH-PLEASE CALM DOWN.

YES. THE SECURITY ON THIS ISLAND IS LIGHT YEARS BEYOND STATE OF THE ART, MR. WITTMAN...

AND EVEN IF IT COULD BE BEATEN, NO ONE KNOWS YOU'RE HERE.

OH...GOD KNOWS.

I'M SWITCHING TO INFRARED.

SEE, IF YOU'RE GOING TO JOIN WITH ME DOING THE WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL WORK WE'VE BEEN PUT ON THIS EARTH TO DO, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO OPEN YOURSELVES UP TO SOME RADICAL NEW NOTIONS OF SCIENCE.

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO EXPAND YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS. EXPAND YOUR...OH, HELLO THERE...

HOW VERY... FAMILIAR.

WUH-WUH-*WHAT?*

HOW DID...

HOW?

FATE, DR. FORSON.

NO. THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND US.

-TT- THE WIZARD'S HELMET ONLY SHIELDS HIS BRAINWAVES WHEN HE WEARS IT. IF SOMEONE HAS AN EXACT COPY--AND WE DO--MR. WITTMAN WOULD BE BEST ADVISED TO WEAR IT ALL THE TIME.

I CAN ONLY BEAR SO MUCH OF A BURDEN...IT ITCHES WHEN I SLEEP.

HELLO, LITTLE TWENTY-THREE.

MY NAME IS BENTLEY NOW.

I'VE EARNED IT.

BE THAT AS IT MAY...HAVE YOU DECIDED TO COME HOME, LITTLE PRODIGAL?

NO. THAT'S NOT WHY WE'RE HERE.

THIS IS.

WE NEED TO KNOW IF YOU'RE COMING.

HMMMMM....

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT THE SYMPOSIUM ON:
"CONQUERING THE MOUNT FANTASTIC: HOW TO FINALLY DEFEAT REED RICHARDS"
HOSTED BY VICTOR VON DOOM
TO BE HELD AT THE BAXTER BUILDIN
TWO DAYS HENCE
Q&A TO FOLLOW THE MAIN PRESENTATION

HOW COULD WE REFUSE?

TWO DAYS LATER.
THE BAXTER BUILDING.

WELCOME.
TOGETHER, WE WILL DO A GREAT, GREAT THING.
BUT...

...BEFORE YOU BEGIN, I WANT TO REITERATE A POINT I'VE ALREADY MADE TO VICTOR. NUMEROUS TIMES.
YOU ARE ONLY HERE BECAUSE MY DAUGHTER SAYS THAT IT IS NECESSARY AND MY FATHER HAS VOUCHED FOR BOTH HER AND DOOM.
KNOW THAT THE AVENGERS ARE ON STANDBY, AND IF I GET A SINGLE WHIFF OF THIS GOING BEYOND A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION, THIS SITUATION WILL GO NUCLEAR FASTER THAN YOU CAN SAY THE ATOMIC WEIGHT OF HYDROGEN.
AM I GETTING THROUGH TO EVERYONE?

YOU'RE SAYING THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY TEA.
SO...EXACTLY WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WE HAVE GATHERED TO SOLVE? WHY DO WE NEED TO DEFEAT REED RICHARDS?
YOU MAY BEGIN, YOUNG LADY.
FIRST, DAD, I'M SORRY THAT I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU THIS YET, BUT THERE'S A VERY GOOD REASON.
IT ALL STARTED WHEN...

OH!

THE WATCHER...

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, VALERIA?

"I FOUND THE MACHINE, DAD. THE ONE YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BUILD.

"I WENT THROUGH IT AND FOUND THE COUNCIL.

"I FOUND ALL THOSE *YOUS*.

"I FOUND OUT THEY CAME FROM DIFFERENT EARTHS. DIFFERENT EARTHS IN DIFFERENT UNIVERSES...

"UNIVERSES THEY CONTROLLED...

"...UNTIL THEY WERE FOUND BY ANGRY GODS.

"SO I RAN BACK HOME...

"AND THEY CAME WITH ME..."

IT'S SEALED.

AND WE'RE ALL THAT'S LEFT.

CONSIDER IT GOOD FORTUNE THAT THEY DID NOT *COMBINE.*

A REPORT, PLEASE.

MY CEREBLOCUM IS READING STANDARD CLIMATE, PLATE INTEGRITY, AND A STABLE CORE...A GENERIC TYPE-C EARTH. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO STANDARD POWER SOURCE BEYOND LARGE CORE NUCLEAR...

GOD, REED...WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN WASTING ALL YOUR TIME ON?

FAMILY PICNICS, I'M GUESSING.

GENTLEMEN...

RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE WORLDS DYING WHILE WE STAND HERE TRAPPED ON THIS ONE. LOOK HARDER.

FIND ME SOMETHING I CAN *USE.*

INCREASING VARIABLES... EXPANDING SEARCH...

OH...NOW THIS IS USEFUL. A STABLE GEOTHERMAL VENT, AN ASCENSION ENGINE, AND THERE'S A DORMANT DYNAMO UNDER THE BLUE AREA OF THE MOON. ALL ON A CURVED AXIS...

AND IT MATCHES THE HARMONICS OF THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

SOL'S ANVIL.

WE HAVEN'T USED THAT IN...

THREE YEARS.

WHEN WE CRUSHED A BEYONDER FROM UNIVERSE 5202.

WELL THAT'S IT, THEN--TIME TO BUILD SOMETHING.

FAREWELL, LITTLE GIRL. I WOULD TELL YOU TO BEHAVE, BUT YOU VALS JUST DON'T HAVE IT IN YOU. DO YOU?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO DO WHAT IS *RIGHT*.

TELL YOUR FATHER WHAT YOU'VE DONE...TELL HIM HE STILL HAS A PLACE WITH US.

MONTHS LATER.
THE PEAK.
OLD ATLANTIS.

DID YOU BRING WHAT I REQUESTED?

YESSS.

WHAT?

WHAT IS THIS?

HOLD HIM STILL.

THIS IS GOING TO HURT.

SCHHUNNNNNK

AARRRRRRGH

YOU DID NOT SAY THAT YOU WOULD KILL HIM.

DIDN'T SAY I WOULDN'T. BESIDES...IT WAS NECESSARY.

THIS WILL UPSET THE BALANCE-- SOMEONE WILL ANSWER FOR THIS. YOU HAD NO CAUSE!

ACTUALLY, I DID.

SEE? IT WAS HIDDEN DEEP INSIDE HIS BRAIN... BUT THERE IT IS...

THE UHARI ARE PLOTTING AGAINST YOUR GREAT HOUSES. THEY ARE PLANNING TO CEMENT THEIR GRASP DURING EXPANSION.

THEY WILL CONTROL WHO GETS THE FIRST BITE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

SLIPPERY.

YES. THIS WILL HAVE TO BE HANDLED DELICATELY.

THE UHARI MUST BE REMOVED FROM POWER.

OH, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO MORE THAN THAT...

THE GOOD NEWS IS I CAN HELP.

BUT I'M GOING TO NEED SOMETHING IN RETURN.

THE FOREVER CITY.

LOOK AT THAT.

LIKE SO MANY THINGS, THE REAL MAGIC LIES BEYOND WHAT IS EASILY VISIBLE.

THE ASCENSION ENGINE IS THE VERY BEST OF EVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGY.

IN FACT, IT'S REALLY A MECHANICAL REFLECTION OF WHAT MY BROTHERS AND I ARE--WE BOTH TRULY PUSH PROGRESS.

GLORIOUS, ISN'T IT?

NO...IT IS *NOT.*

YOU SHOULDN'T FEAR PROGRESS, HARVEY ELDER. IT'S INEVITABLE. UNAVOIDABLE.

AND ONLY, ON VERY RARE OCCASIONS, CAN IT BE DELAYED.

WITH EACH PASSING DAY, MORE AND MORE OF MY MOLOIDS LEAVE ME TO VENTURE TO THE FOREVER CITY TO BE... TRANSFORMED.

IT MUST STOP.

AH...WHO WOULD WANT TO BE THE MOLE MAN IF THE CROWN NO LONGER COMES WITH A KINGDOM?

I...WANT... MY PEOPLE BACK.

AND EXACTLY WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN?

THE BLUE AREA OF THE MOON.

THE UNIVERSAL INHUMANS.

...AND THAT IS WHAT WE CAN OFFER EACH OF YOU-- I'M SURE YOU ALL AGREE, IT IS NO SMALL AMOUNT.

IN RETURN, WE WILL NEED FULL ACCESS TO A SMALL PORTION OF THE BLUE AREA WHERE WE ARE PLANNING SEVERAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENDEAVORS.

THOSE ARE MY TERMS...DO YOU FIND THEM AGREEABLE?

ARRIS?

IT'S INTERESTING, MY QUEEN. HE IS HEAVILY SHIELDED, BUT APPARENTLY HAS NEVER ENCOUNTERED A CENTAURI TELEPATH...

AND?

HE LIES.

WHITEMANE!

NO!

THERE'S NO NEED TO...

I CAN EXPLAIN IF YOU...

URK!

HE...HE... HE AND HIS KIND POSE A VERY REAL DANGER TO US.

THEY HAVE...GREAT AND TERRIBLE PLANS.

THEN WE MUST MATCH THEM.

THE OTHER SIDE OF ZERO.
THE CULT OF THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

YOU ARE WEARING THE WRONG FACE IF YOU EXPECT ME TO TRUST YOU.

TRUST...

I SEE THROUGH YOU, *ANTI-PRIEST.* THROUGH YOU AND BEYOND... I WOULD HAVE A WORD WITH YOUR MASTER.

I REQUEST AN AUDIENCE.

FOLLOW ME.

MY MASTER...

ANNIHILUS.

SSSSPPPPEEEEAK, RICHAAARRDS.

YES...WELL, FIRST, I AM NOT THE REED RICHARDS YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH. I AM ACTUALLY FROM ANOTHER UNIVERSE... I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THIS CONCEPT.

I WOULD LIKE TO RETURN HOME, BUT TO DO THAT, I AM GOING TO NEED TO ACCESS THE NEGATIVE ZONE...

I'M GOING TO NEED TO BRIEFLY OPEN A VERY LARGE PORTAL TO YOUR HOME.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR YOU TO ASSIST ME IN DOING THIS?

LEEEEAAVE IT OPEN.

OPEN FOR AAARRRMMIES. OPEN FOR DESSTRUCTION...

OPEN FOR ANNIHILATION!

THAT CAN BE ARRANGED.

NOW.

STILL NO WORD FROM OUR BROTHER?

NOTHING. DOES THIS CHANGE THINGS?

NO. THE DYNAMO CAN BE ACTIVATED REMOTELY... IT'S JUST NOT IDEAL.

WHERE ARE WE REGARDING THE TRIGGER?

WE'RE VERY CLOSE...

CONSTRUCTION OF THE HUB WILL BE COMPLETED ON SCHEDULE.

WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE?

NOW WE SACRIFICE THIS WORLD FOR THE GREATER GOOD. ONE WORLD FOR THE MANY...

NOW, BROTHERS, WE ORCHESTRATE A WAR.

THE BEATING OF DRUMS

YOU GUYS SURE LOVE YOUR SANDWICHES.

WHY ARE YOU CUTTING OFF THE CRUST?

HAVE YOU SEEN HOW MANY KIDS WE HAVE RUNNING AROUND HERE?

THE FOOD IS READY!

THE SANDWICH OF STRENGTH! THE SANDWICH OF GLORY!

YOU'RE WELCOME.

ALMOST ALL THE CHILDREN PREFER THEM CRUST-FREE... EXCEPT, WELL...*VAL.*

I'M SHOCKED.

YEAH. SHE SAYS THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CRUST AND THE INSIDES AND THAT EXCLUSION IS A WASTE OF TIME.

THEN REED ALWAYS SAYS, NOT NECESSARILY. CONSIDER THE FACT THAT A PERSON IS THE SAME FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THEY ARE DEAD AND FIVE MINUTES AFTER THEY ARE DEAD.

THEN VAL ALWAYS SAYS BACK: *EXACTLY.* AND ON AND ON IT GOES...

DO YOU WANT MAYONNAISE?

GROSS.

OKAY, THEN...

CRUST OR NO CRUST?

NO CRUST.

HERE YOU GO.

THANKS, SUSAN.

SO, I'VE GOT TO ASK...HOW IS IT YOU'RE SO COOL WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S GOING ON?

I MEAN, HAVE YOU SEEN WHO ALL WENT IN THAT ROOM WITH REED, HIS OLD MAN, AND VAL?

LET'S SEE... I SAW YOU SHOW UP WITH THE *MAD THINKER.* I BROUGHT THE *WIZARD* AND HIS *A.I.M.* LIEUTENANTS.

I ALSO SAW *DIABLO* AND THE *HIGH EVOLUTIONARY*... OH, AND WHO COULD FORGET ONE *VICTOR VON DOOM.*

Butter

KETCHUP

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ALL HAVE IN COMMON?

=MUNCH= WHAT'S THAT?

THROUGH THE YEARS, I'VE BEATEN EVERY ONE OF THEM.

OVER AND OVER.

BADLY.

SO YOU TELL ME...

DO YOU THINK I SHOULD BE AFRAID OF THEM...

OR SHOULD THEY BE AFRAID OF ME?

FAIR POINT.

EEEE

THE COUNCIL OF DOOM.

THE WATCHER

THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY

NATHANIEL RICHARDS

REED RICHARDS

VALERIA RICHARDS

DOCTOR DOOM

THE MAD THINKER

THIS IS...

DIABLO

THE WIZARD

THE WIZARD'S A.I.M. LIEUTENANTS

THIS IS A DISASTER.

I'M SORRY, DAD. I...

VAL. STOP. DON'T ACT LIKE THAT.

DON'T ACT LIKE THE FIRST THING YOU DID WASN'T TRYING TO COVER UP YOUR MISTAKE INSTEAD OF TELLING ME WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

I FIGURED THEY WOULD HAVE EXPECTED ME TO DO THAT.

SO I DID THE OTHER THING.

YES.

THE BETTER THING.

DO ANY OF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT'S BEEN UNLEASHED?

I FIND THIS ALL VERY DISTURBING, RICHARDS...

I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LIKE THIS BEFORE.

YES, SOMEONE'S PUT THE FEAR OF GOD IN HIM.

WUH-WUH-WUH-WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST AS OUR FIRST COURSE OF ACTION, DOCTOR RICHARDS?

WHY ARE YOU ASKING HIM, MAN OF SCIENCE?

IS THAT NOT WHY WE HAVE CONVENED HERE?

YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION?

OF COURSE... WE CONCENTRATE ON HIS WEAKNESSES.

MAYBE WE FIND OUT WHO THEIR SUSANS ARE, MAYBE WE FIND OUT WHAT THEY LOVE AND TAKE IT FROM THEM--USE IT TO BARGAIN WITH THEM, MAKE THEM OUR POSSESSIONS.

MAYBE WE TAKE THEIR CHILDREN.

NO. NO. NO. OBVIOUS... OBVIOUS. EXPECTED OPENING MOVE.

NO, THERE'S SOMETHING WE'RE MISSING--THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING WE OVERLOOK. HE WANTS US TO THINK HIS WEAKNESS IS HIS FAMILY, IT'S WHY HE SHOWS IT TO US.

UNLESS HE KNOWS WE KNOW THAT, AND THEN HE'S SHOWING IT TO US BECAUSE IT'S PRECISELY WHERE HE'S WEAK.

BUT BY SHOWING US, HE'S LETTING US KNOW THAT THIS ISN'T A WEAKNESS AT ALL.

WE HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL...OR WE'LL OVERLOOK SOMETHING.

HMMMMM. IT SEEMS THERE ARE TWO OPTIONS...TWO CHOICES.

TWO WOMEN CAME BEFORE KING SOLOMON AND CLAIMED A CHILD AS THEIR OWN. HE PROPOSED TO CUT THE BABY IN HALF, GIVING ONE PART TO EACH MOTHER.

SO, LET'S DO THAT!

LET'S CUT ALL THE BABIES IN HALF!

STOP!

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.

YES, THESE MEN ARE VERSIONS OF ME, AND THEREFORE POSSESS AN INTELLIGENCE OF A SIMILAR--OR IN SOME INSTANCES, GREATER-- MAGNITUDE.

BUT THEY ARE ALSO *NOT* ME.

THEY DO NOT HAVE FAMILIES OR FRIENDS. THEY ONLY HAVE EACH OTHER AND THEIR CAUSE. THEY PUSH WORLDS AROUND AND REBUILD SUNS...

THIS IS MUCH, *MUCH* WORSE THAN ANY OF YOU COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED.

PLONK

NOW YOU'RE DEAD.

HRMPH.

SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WAITIN' FOR THE INEVITABLE, KIDDO. IT'S TOO QUIET IN THERE.

HMMMMM. MAYBE THERE'S NO NOISE BECAUSE SOMETHING'S GONE HORRIBLY WRONG.

WE SHOULD TOTALLY BREAK IN...I HAVE A BLOWTORCH HIDDEN UNDER MY BED.

OF COURSE YOU DO.

WHY DO YOU THINK SOMETHING BAD'S GOING TO HAPPEN?

MAYBE I'M BEGINNIN' TO EXPECT IT.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, KID?

THAT'S PROBABLY WISE.

SO, DO YOU HAVE A WILL? ARE YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER?

OH, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. HAVE YOU SEEN WHO'S IN THAT ROOM?

THIS IS REALLY TURNING INTO MY KIND OF PLACE.

I THINK THE BETTER QUESTION, MR. MONSTERFACE...

IF YOU SEE REED OR SUE, TELL 'EM I'M TAKIN' A FEW DAYS OFF.

I NEED A BREAK.

...IS WHAT ARE YOU STILL DOING HERE?

OW! OW!

TERMINATED!

HEY! WHERE'S UNCLE BEN GOING?

HE DIDN'T SAY EXACTLY.

HUH. WE WERE GOING TO...

EEEE

ELSEWHERE IN THE BAXTER BUILDING.

THERE IT IS...DO YOU SEE IT, ALEX?

BEHIND THE COOLING COIL.

GOT IT!

NOW YOU JUST HAVE TO RECONNECT THE TWO...

YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW...

THERE! SHOULD BE AS GOOD AS NEW.

MUCH THANKS, ALEX.

YES! TOO WARM MEANS TOO TART.

AND WHO WOULD WANT THA...

EEEE

MOMENTS LATER.

IT'S COMING FROM...

...MY BEDROOM.

OH, NO...

THE SPIRAL.

I AM HERE.

SUSAN OF THE STORM! DARK WATER! DARK WATER!

THERE IS OPEN REVOLT IN THE PEAK! CHORDA! AND MALA HAVE UNITED TO STEAL THE CROWN.

I'M ON MY WAY.

TELL THE UHARI TO HOLD.

I'LL GO GET REED AND...

NO.

IF SOMETHING IS BAD ENOUGH TO REQUIRE HIS BRINGING ALL THOSE PEOPLE INTO OUR HOME, THEN HE NEEDS TO DEAL WITH THAT.

WE'LL HANDLE THIS OURSELVES. DRAGON MAN, YOU HAVE THE HOUSE...

SPIDER-MAN AND ALEX, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME.

HUMOR ME, DOCTOR RICHARDS, WHILE I LAY THIS OUT...

YOU'RE SAYING THESE MEN ARE JUST AS INTELLIGENT AS YOU, BUT LACK THE SOFT NATURE AND GENERAL WEAKNESS THAT YOU POSSESS?

THAT THEY HAVE THE AMBITION TO RULE WORLDS AND DECIDE THE FATE OF OTHERS AS THEY SEE FIT?

I DO BELIEVE I LIKE THESE REEDS.

YOU WOULDN'T...

ONE OF THE THINGS THEY DO IS TURN ANY VICTOR VON DOOMS THEY ENCOUNTER ON ANY WORLD INTO VEGETABLES.

THEY CONSIDER YOU TOO DANGEROUS TO JUST LET WANDER AROUND.

WELL THEN... I DO BELIEVE I LIKE THESE REEDS.

...

THE QUESTION REMAINS: HOW DO WE FIND AND DEFEAT THESE MEN?

THESE... *PERFECT REEDS?*

ALL THESE SMART PEOPLE, AND NONE OF YOU ARE ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION.

EXCUSE ME?

YOU HEARD ME, VICTOR.

HERE, WHY DON'T I MAKE THIS EASY FOR ALL OF YOU?

SON, CONSIDER THE POSITION THAT THE OTHER YOUS CURRENTLY FIND THEMSELVES IN.

THEIR PROBLEM IS NOT A PERSONAL ONE, NOR IS IT ONE THAT CAN BE SOLVED CONVENTIONALLY... BUT THEY ARE DESPERATE AND ARE PROBABLY GOING TO HAVE TO BREAK SOME RULES AND TAKE SOME RISKS THEY NORMALLY WOULDN'T. THEY'LL BE OPERATING OUTSIDE OF THEIR NORMAL PARAMETERS.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE IN THEIR PLACE?

WHAT ***HAVE*** YOU DONE WHEN YOU HAVE FOUND YOURSELF IN AN IMPOSSIBLE POSITION FACING UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS?

THEY'RE BUILDING A MACHINE.

AH. THEN WE HAVE THEM.

AND HOW IS THAT, DOOM?

BECAUSE WE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE GOING TO BE...

BECAUSE SOMEONE HERE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO BUILD.

THEY CALL IT SOL'S ANVIL.

IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH A MACHINE BURIED ON THE MOON, AND THERE'S A BIT WITH THE NEGATIVE ZONE...

AND SOME WAY TO USE THE ASCENSION ENGINE IN THE FOREVER CITY... AND THEN THEY NEED A THERMAL VENT...

THEY PLAN ON USING THE ONE UNDER OLD ATLANTIS.

TWO HOURS LATER.
THE PEAK.
OLD ATLANTIS.

GODS-- YOU'RE JUST IN TIME.

FILL ME IN.

WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SEALED OFF THE PINNACLE OF THE PEAK. NO CHORDAI OR MALA CAN GET IN.

SO, WE'RE AT A STANDOFF... I CAN WORK WITH THAT.

NO. THEY ARE AMPHIBIOUS WHILE WE ARE NOT. WE NOW BELIEVE THEY PLAN TO SHATTER THE SHIELD, DROWNING US WITH AIR.

THEY WENT TO THE WELL BELOW, GATHERING THE BEAST FOR MIGRATION...

...AND NOW THEY HAVE RETURNED!

BUH-ZZAAOOO

BA-BOOOOM

LET'S GO!

FOOM

ALEX! LOOK OUT!

THERE'S ONE HEADED RIGHT FOR YOU!

I SEE IT.

I'LL MAKE HIM TOO HEAVY TO MOVE.

NICE ONE.

HEY, SPIDER-MAN...

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE SMILING.

ARE THEY SMILING?

WHY WOULD THEY BE SMILING?

THEY ARE... *HERE.*

RRRRR—

RRRUUUMMMBBLLLE

SURE, WHY NOT...

ANYONE KNOW EXACTLY WHEN THE SOUTH POLE BECAME A DESTINATION VACATION FOR SUPER VILLAINS?

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

NOTHING HAS CHANGED. WE ARE... ARE...

OH MY GOD...

IS THAT...

AS PROMISED...WE HAVE ARRIVED.

GOOD.

BRING THAT CITY DOWN.

REED?

THE SOUND OF WAR

THE BAXTER BUILDING.

HOW LONG AGO DID THEY LEAVE?

TWO HOURS AGO, DOCTOR RICHARDS.

SHE ASKED US NOT TO BOTHER YOU, BUT WHEN THE SPIRAL STOPPED SINGING, THE DRAGON FELT YOU NEEDED TO KNOW.

THANK YOU, WU. YOU DID THE RIGHT THING.

I'M PRETTY SURE THIS DEVICE RELIES ON SPATIAL RESONANCE...

WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FORCE A CONNECTION.

EASY, BOYS...

WE DON'T WANT A RUCKUS.

SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH, MISTER?

HMMM.

ANY LUCK, SON?

ONE MORE CONNECTION AND WE SHOULD GET...

SOMETHING.

I'LL TRY AND CLEAN UP THE SIGNAL, AND...OH!

IT'S... IT'S GONE...

THE PEAK IS GONE...

THERE'S NOTHING THERE.

THE PEAK.
OLD ATLANTIS.
15 MINUTES AGO.

REED?

WE'VE ARRIVED.

HAVE YOUR SLAVES ASSEMBLE THE MACHINES, MOLE MAN.

I'LL PROVIDE A DISTRACTION.

THERE! STRIKE ON THE SOUTH SIDE. THERE'S A WEAKNESS IN THE SHIELD.

BEGIN THE ASSAULT.

PUH-THOOOOM

UH...WHY IS REED HELPING THEM ATTACK THE CITY?

YOU TWO STAY HERE.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

HELLO, HARVEY. GET LOST AND SUDDENLY FIND YOURSELF IN A COLD AND UNINVITING PLACE?

AKKK! RICHARDS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I'M MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU'VE ROPED MY HUSBAND INTO.

WELL? REED? ARE YOU GOING TO EXPLAIN HOW YOU GOT HERE AND WHAT YO...

YOU'RE NOT MY REED.

NO, I'M NOT...

I'M MUCH MORE PARTIAL TO BRUNETTES.

AAAA

SUSAN!

SHE'S HURT... I'M GOING AFTER HER.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

I DON'T KNOW, ALEX. GET CREATIVE...DO *SOMETHING.*

OKAY, FINE...

...DO SOMETHING.

RUMBLE

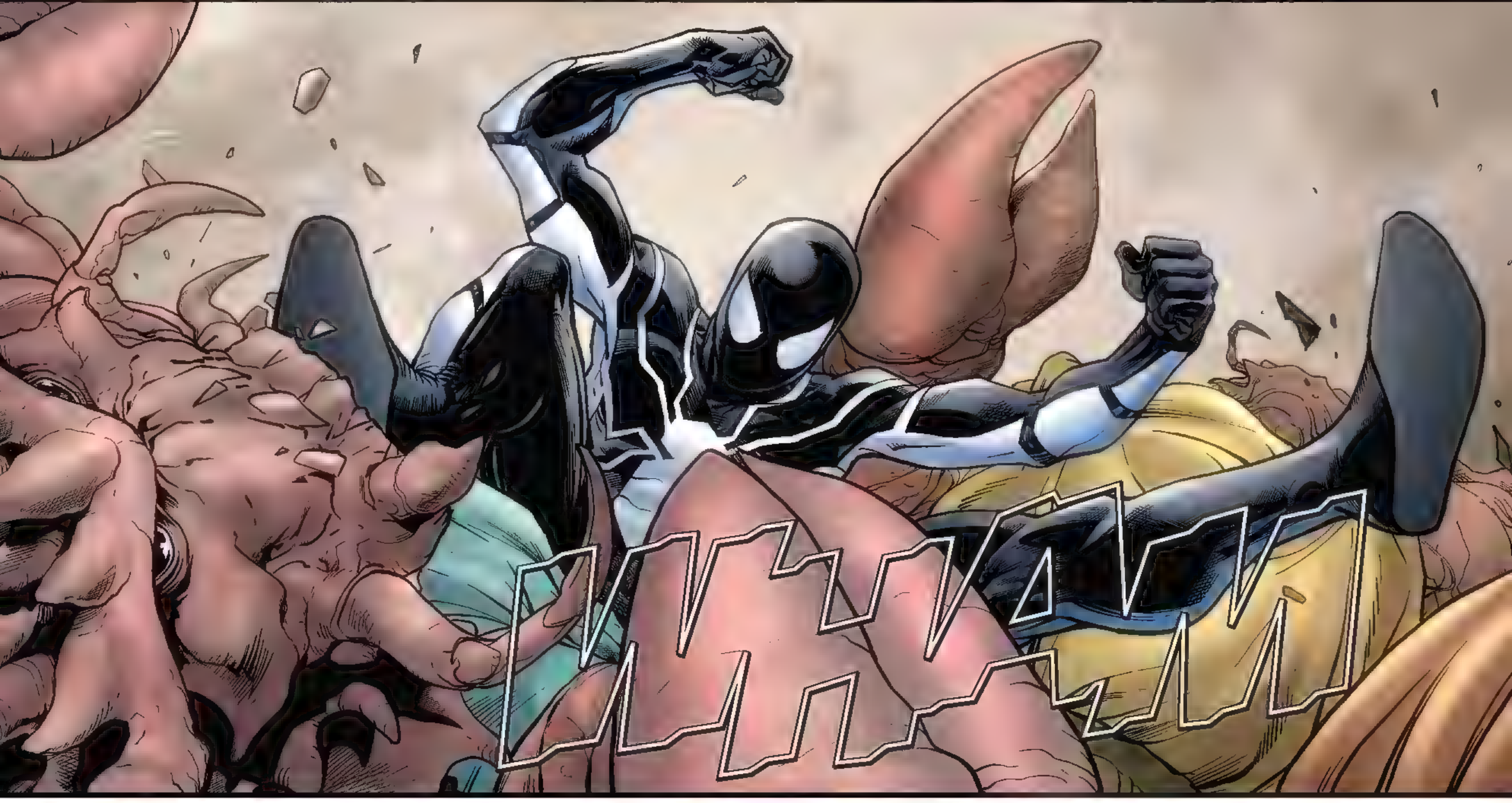
PUH-THOOOOM

OKAY... COOL.

NOW THAT YOU CAN'T GO ANYWHERE, I NEED TO STOP YOU FROM BEING ABLE TO FIRE ON THE CITY.

PUH-THOOOO-UUUU

HEY!
TAKE YOUR TIME, SPIDEY-- I'VE GOT IT COVERED!
ALEX!
LOOK OUT!
AARRGH!
KRAAKK
NOW WE'LL BREAK THE DOME.
JUST LIKE WE'VE BROKEN YOU.
RTHWIPP


WHAM

PUH-THOOOOM

OH, MAN...

KKKRRRAASHH

WE'VE BROKEN THROUGH THE SHIELDING.

AND HAVE YOUR MOLOIDS ASSEMBLED THE MACHINES?

YES. WHENEVER YOU'RE READY, WE CAN AMPLIFY THE VENT BELOW.

IT'LL DESTROY THE CITY.

DO IT.

RRRUMMMMBLLLLEEEE

NO!

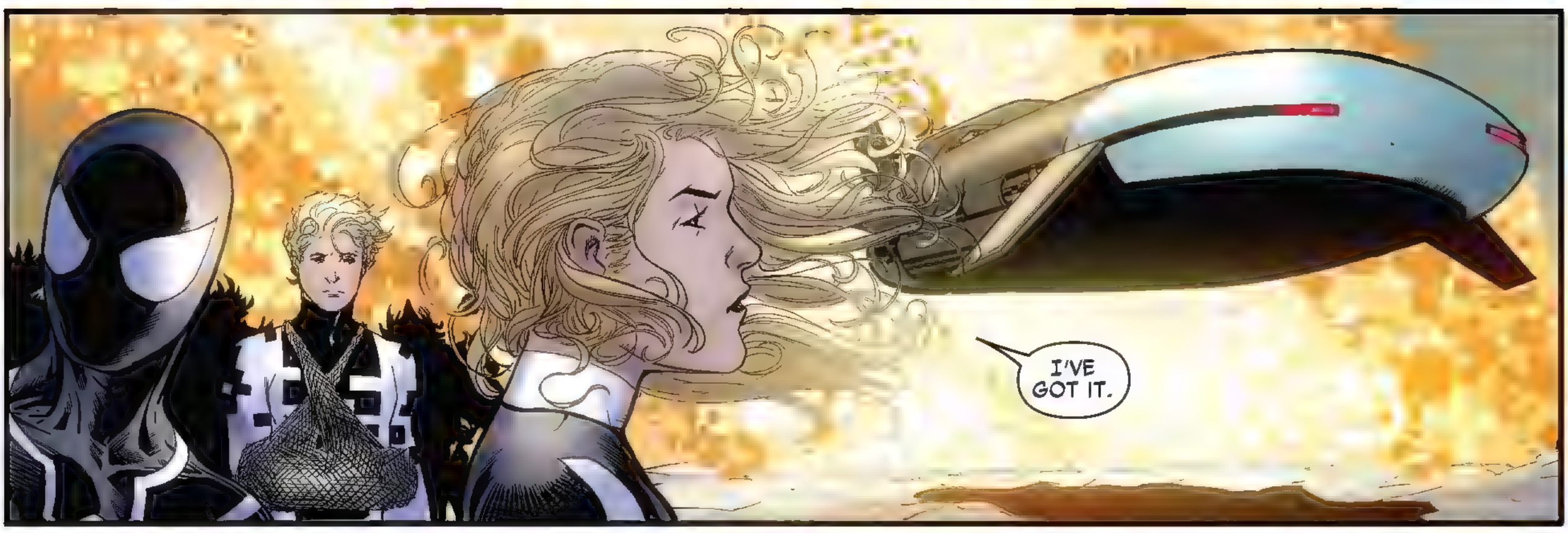
BETRAYAL!

NECESSITY.

WE CAN LEAVE NOW.

THE SHIP!

BA-BA-BOOOOM


I'VE GOT IT.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?
FIRST, I'M GOING TO CALL NAMOR...

...I'LL GET HIM TO RESTORE SOME KIND OF ORDER DOWN HERE AND OFFER SOME HELP RELOCATING EVERYONE.
THEN, AFTER THAT, WE HEAD HOME...
I WANT SOME ANSWERS.

I'M SORRY. I DON'T HAVE ANY *SPLENDA*, BEN, JUST SUGAR.

LATER. ALICIA MASTERS' APARTMENT.

IT'S FINE, ALICIA.

THANKS.

YOU HAVEN'T CALLED.

I KNOW, I...

YOU HAVEN'T CALLED SINCE *THAT NIGHT.*

I...

AND YOU DIDN'T SPEAK TO ME AT THE FUNERAL.

...

I KNOW.

I'M SORRY.

I'VE BEEN KINDA KEEPIN' TO MYSELF. I...

I...I'M JUST HAVIN' A HARD TIME WITH...

BEIN' WITH YOU...IT SHOULDA BEEN THE BEST THING EVER.

NOW I LOOK AT YOU AND ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS HOW I COULDN'T SAVE MY FRIEND.

I FEEL SO GUILTY, ALICIA.

ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME RIGHT NOW?

YEAH.

GOOD. BECAUSE I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU HEAR ME WHEN I SAY THERE ARE TWO THINGS YOU'RE GOING TO *HAVE TO* DEAL WITH...

JOHNNY'S GONE.

AND I LOVE YOU.

ALICIA, DON'T...

NO. YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT I AM NOT GOING ANYWHERE. YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT I NEED YOU AS MUCH AS YOU NEED ME... AND, MOST OF ALL, THAT JOHNNY WOULD WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY.

I PROMISE YOU...THINGS ARE GOING TO GET BETTER...

THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.

LATER.

YOU FRACTURED YOUR ULNA IN THREE PLACES, ALEX.

THIS WILL DECREASE YOUR HEALING TIME...BUT I STILL WANT YOU TO TAKE IT EASY FOR A BIT. HAVE YOU EVER BROKEN A BONE BEFORE?

NO, SIR.

WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A NEW SITUATION, IT DEMANDS BOTH OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS: HOW DID WE GET HERE? HOW DO YOU EITHER PREVENT OR ENCOURAGE IT HAPPENING AGAIN?

SO NEXT TIME I SHOULD WATCH MY BACK.

HEH. YES, BUT DON'T BE TOO CRITICAL... SPIDER-MAN TOLD ME YOU WERE PRETTY FANTASTIC OUT THERE.

I'M PROUD OF YOU, ALEX. GO GET SOME REST.

YES, SIR.

NOW... LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT *YOU*.

YOU'VE GOT A MINOR CONCUSSION, SUSAN, BUT THERE DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE ANY POTENTIAL FOR LONG-TERM DAMAGE.

AND THAT'S YOUR EXPERT DIAGNOSIS?

UH-HUH. I DON'T...

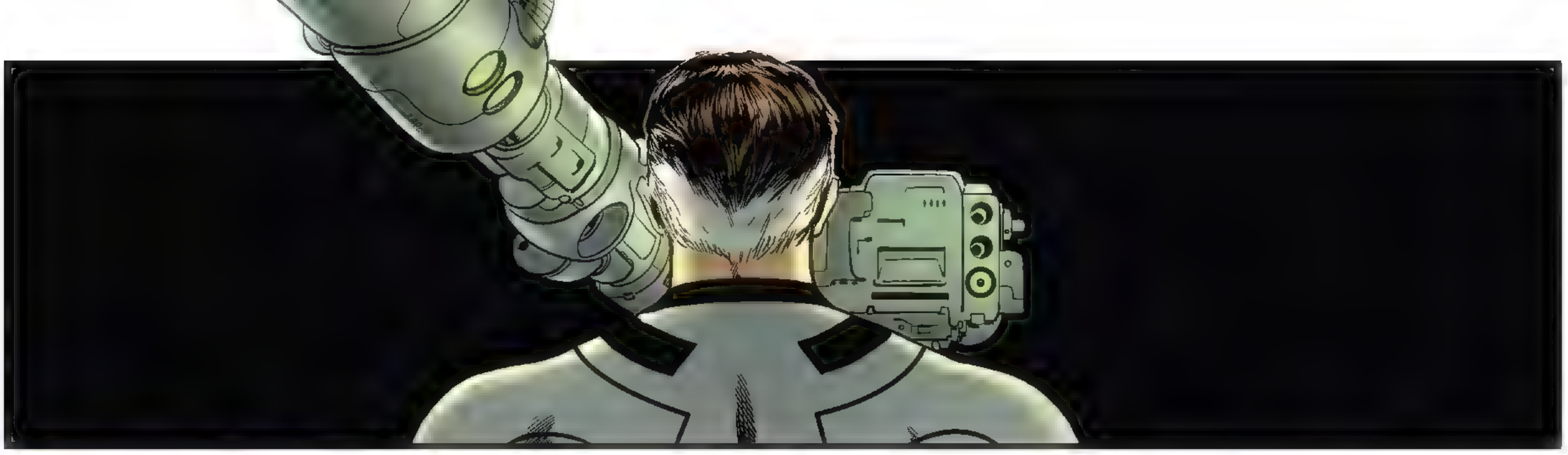
REED, I WAS WATCHING WHEN PETER TOLD YOU WHAT HAPPENED.

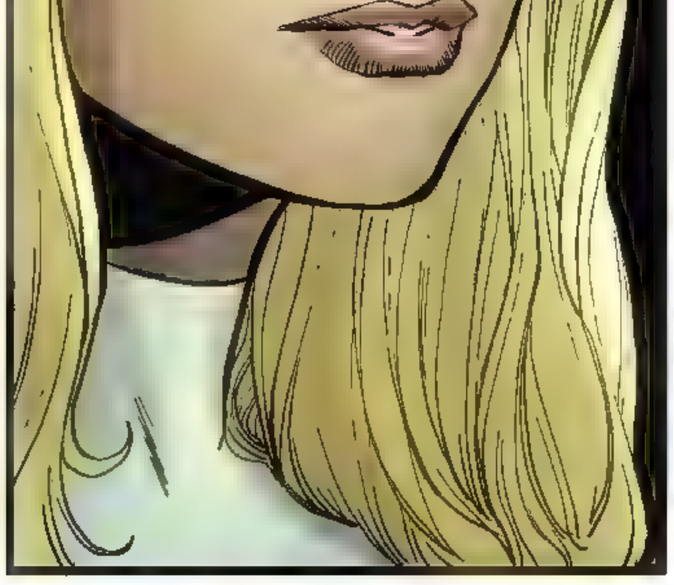
AT FIRST, I THOUGHT MAYBE IT WAS A DARK RAIDER OR SOME VARIANT VERSION OF THE BRUTE...

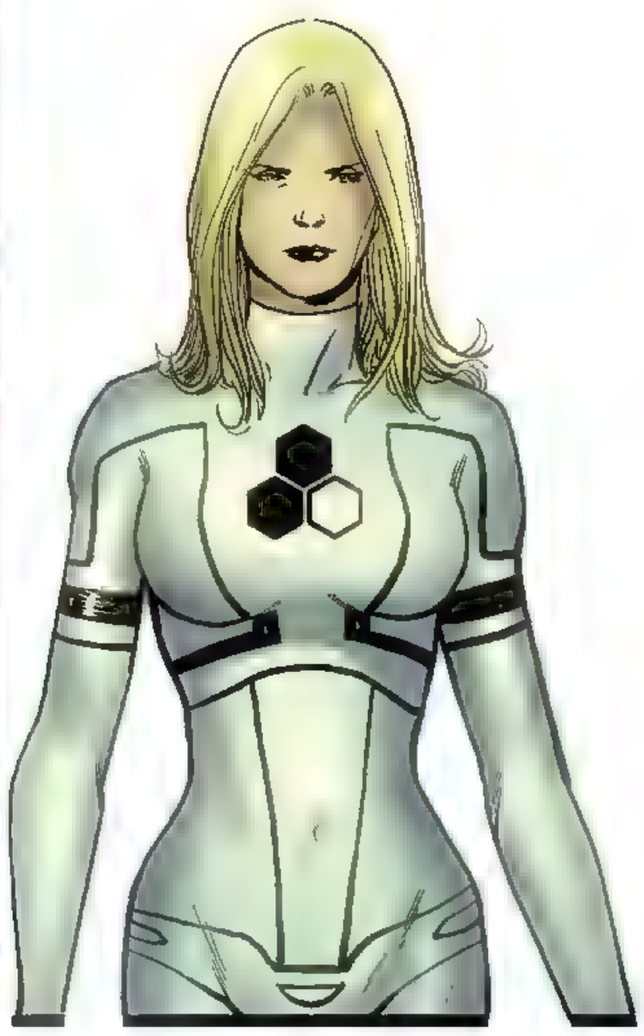
BUT WHEN PETER TOLD YOU ABOUT THE OTHER REED, YOU WEREN'T SURPRISED AT ALL.

AND THEN I BEGAN TO WONDER ***WHY EXACTLY*** ALL THOSE VILLAINS ARE IN MY HOUSE.

WHAT WOULD SCARE THEM AS MUCH AS IT WOULD SCARE US...?




WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN HIDING FROM ME?



OH, SUSAN...

WHAT'S HAPPENED, REED?

I'VE DONE SOMETHING TERRIBLE.

THE FOREVER CITY OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY.

WELL?

AS WE PREDICTED. IT'S THE SAME SYSTEMIC PROBLEM WE'VE SEEN BEFORE.

WE HAVE THE SOLUTION.

YOU HEARD HIM...

WE HAVE THE SOLUTION.

AND IF YOU FIX IT, THE MAKER'S MACHINE WILL BE FULLY FUNCTIONAL? WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROCREATE AND ABANDON ASSIMILATION?

YES.

BUT NOT WITHOUT A PRICE.

THERE IS A DOG BARKING.

SILENCE IT.

THAT DOG...HAS A POINT.

VERY WELL.

REST EASY, ELDER.

THIS WAS A SIMPLE DECISION TO MAKE. AS YOU CAN SEE, OUR TECHNOLOGY HAS MADE US IMMUNE TO THE EFFECTS OF THE ASCENSION ENGINE'S RADIATION. WE ***UNDERSTAND*** THIS DEVICE.

NOW, MAKE YOUR PEACE.

WE WILL ABIDE BY WHAT WAS AGREED.

SAY THE WORDS.

SIGH--- IN RETURN FOR THE ENGINE BEING MADE WHOLE, WE WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT ANY REFUGEES FROM YOUR PEOPLE INTO OUR BODY.

THE DOORS TO THE CITY WILL REMAIN CLOSED.

ACCEPTED.

HOW LONG UNTIL THE WORK IS COMPLETED?

ACTUALLY, NOT LONG...

LESS THAN A DAY IF WE CAN GET...

GET...

WHAT IS *THAT?!*

LATENT KREE DESIGN...

HAVE OUR MYSTERIOUS FRIENDS FROM THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON COME TO PAY US A VISIT?

NO...

"...THAT'S ATTILAN.

"THIS WORLD'S INHUMANS HAVE RETURNED TO EARTH."

COVER GALLERY

FANTASTIC FOUR #579 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #580 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #581 COVER **ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**

FANTASTIC FOUR #582 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #583 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #584 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST FAMILY

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #586 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #587 COVER

ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ

FANTASTIC FOUR #588 COVER **ALAN DAVIS, MARK FARMER & JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**

FF #1 COVER **STEVE EPTING**

FF #2 COVER **DANIEL ACUÑA**

FF #3 COVER **DANIEL ACUÑA**

FF #2 COVER **DANIEL ACUÑA**

FF #5 COVER **MARK BAGLEY, ANDY LANNING & PAUL MOUNTS**

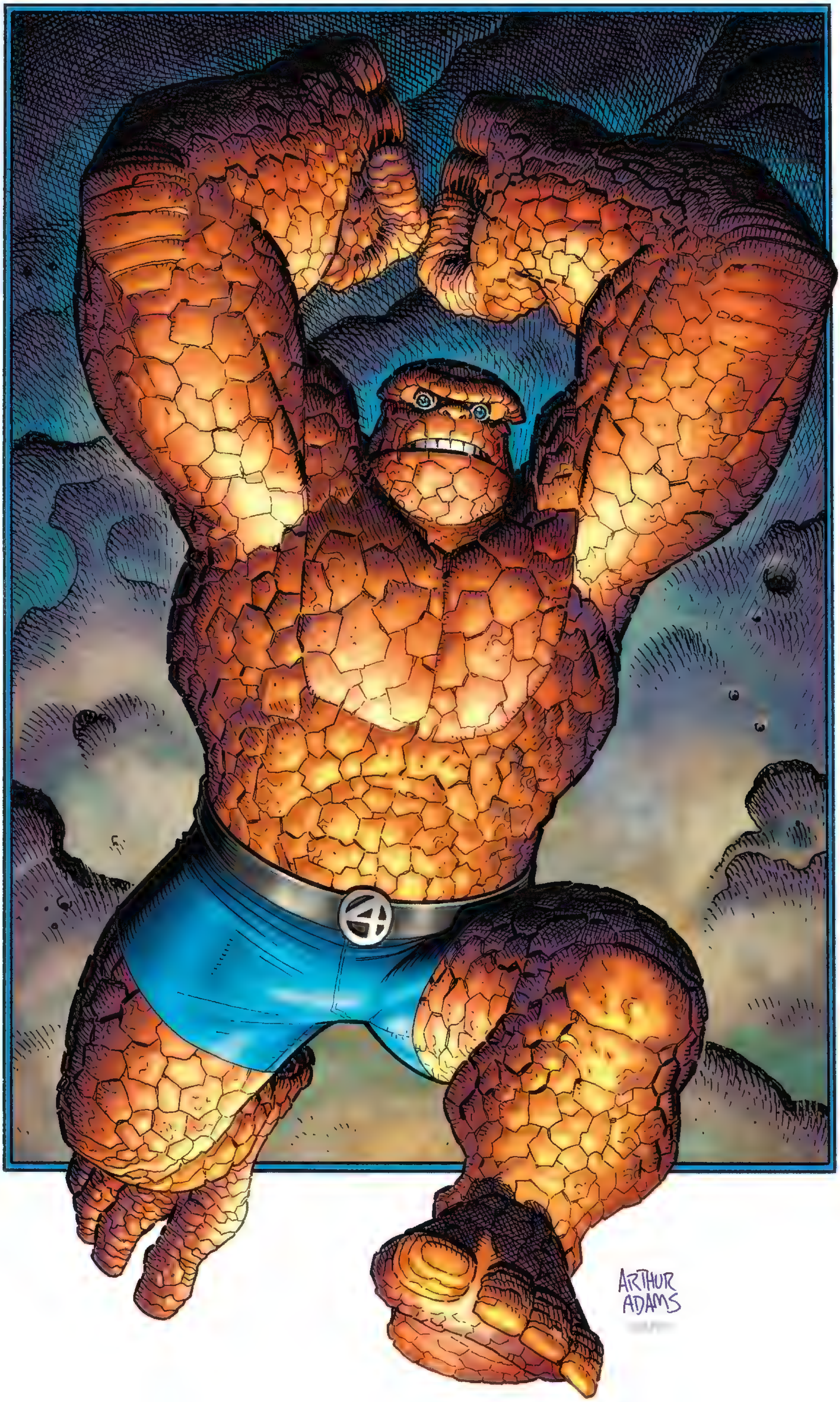
FANTASTIC FOUR #573 HEROIC AGE VARIANT

JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER

FANTASTIC FOUR

FANTASTIC FOUR #583 VARIANT **ARTHUR ADAMS**

FANTASTIC FOUR #584 VARIANT **ARTHUR ADAMS**



FANTASTIC FOUR #584 VAMPIRE VARIANT DAVID YARDIN

FANTASTIC FOUR #587 VARIANT

JOHN CASSADAY

FANTASTIC FOUR #587 2ND PRINTING VARIANT

JOE QUESADA, DANNY MIKI & RICHARD ISANOVE

FANTASTIC FOUR #583 4TH PRINTING & FANTASTIC FOUR #584-586 3RD PRINTING VARIANTS

FF #1 VARIANT **DANIEL ACUÑA**

FF #1 VARIANT **STAN GOLDBERG, JOE SINNOTT & VAL STAPLES**

FF #1 50TH ANNIVERSARY VARIANT

GERALD PAREL

FF #1 2ND PRINTING VARIANT **ED McGUINNESS & CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**

FF #1 CHARACTER VARIANT

MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ

FF #2 CHARACTER VARIANT **MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ**

FF #3 CHARACTER VARIANT **MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ**

FF #4 CHARACTER VARIANT **MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ**

FANTASTIC FOUR HOUSE AD

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE
WITH WRITER JONATHAN HICKMAN

Marvel: What is the "FF" series all about?

JONATHAN HICKMAN: We made the new old again in Fantastic Four, and now this is about making that sentimental book seem new again… which kind of translates into transforming the FF into a modern Marvel Universe book.

Okay, that sounded ridiculous, how about this: The FF is about injecting the First Family back into the Marvel Universe proper.

Much better.

Marvel: With Fantastic Four #588, you brought an end to Marvel's oldest super hero team. Now you're launching something new, but connected to that past—why is that such a natural evolution of the Fantastic Four concept and characters?

JH: When I took this job, I spent a lot of time reading old issues and really trying to figure out exactly what makes the FF tick. What works, what doesn't work, what used to work, but no longer does… and finally, what has the potential to work — in other words, what new things I can do to enhance the book's legacy and not diminish it.

This — the relaunch and renaming — will make a lot more sense once we get to the other side, but for now, everyone should hopefully just check it, enjoy the ride, and know that my motives are pure.

It's going to be a lot of fun.

Marvel: The big news is new member, Spider-Man. Why was he the perfect fit for the team?

JH: Ehhhhh, lots of reasons, but, unfortunately, that's a read-and-find-out thing. I will say this, he's really a lot of fun to write.

That Dan Slott certainly has a killer gig.

Marvel: You're teaming with Steve Epting — why's he so perfect for this series?

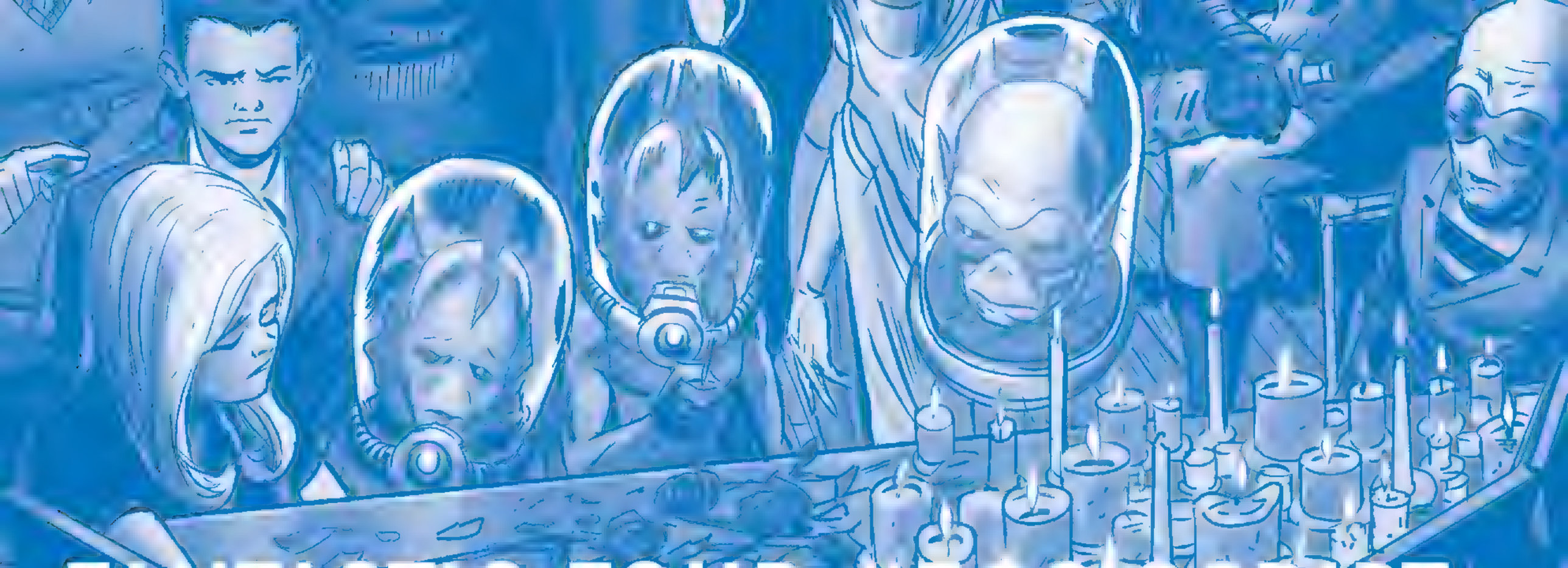
JH: Well, setting aside the fact that he's a pro's pro, insanely talented and a great storyteller, Steve gets the 'scale' that Fantastic Four, and now FF, requires. I'm a lucky guy to be working with him

Marvel: If someone hasn't read your run on Fantastic Four or isn't familiar with these characters, why is this a perfect time to jump onboard?

JH: First of all, because it's all laid out for you right there in the issue. Where we've been, what's going on now, and more importantly, where we're going.

Secondly, because this is a really good chance to try the characters out in their new skins… to take the ideas of 'Family,' 'Science' and 'Exploration' and ramp them up to their full potential.

Like I said, it's going to be a lot of fun. I hope everyone will check it out.



FANTASTIC FOUR #588 SCRIPT

JONATHAN HICKMAN

Page 1 - (4 panels)

NOTE: NO Spider-Man here.

Panel 1 - A wide shot of the Baxter Building. We can see an Avengers jet approaching as well as various heroes flying beside it -- Thor and Iron Man, etc. -- It should look like they are converging on the building.

Caption: A Month of Mourning.
Day 1.

Panel 2 - Inside the building. The Avengers are running through the halls/corridors. We want to feature Thor, Hawkeye, Iron Man and Wolverine.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - They reach the door of Reed's lab. We see past them into the room…right where we left off last issue. Ben Grimm sits with his back against the Negative Zone portal. He holds Franklin in one arm and Val in the other. All the kids of the Future Foundation are standing around them.

NOTE: Franklin is demonstrably upset, Val should appear to be numb or disconnected -- not crying.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Close on Ben, Val and Franklin. Val should be talking to the Avengers and motioning to the Negative Zone portal behind them. Telling them what has happened.

No DIALOGUE

Page 2 - (5 panels)

Panel 1 - On the Avengers reacting to what Val is telling them -- the story of the Annihilation Wave and Johnny Storm being left behind – they are ready for a fight… to go to the rescue. Wolverine is popping his claws and Thor looks ready for action.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Close on Ben Grimm. He's cutting his eyes up toward us. "Johnny's dead."

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - The same shot as panel 1. Except now they looked stunned.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - On Hawkeye, looking back -- surprised and gesturing -- back toward the door they came through. "Hey, guys…"

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Wide on the room. Everyone turning to look at what he is bringing to their attention.

No DIALOGUE

Page 3 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - On Susan Richards, in the doorway. "What's going on?"

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Franklin running to his mother. Telling her.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Susan drops to her knees. Crumbling in the middle of everyone. The news hitting her like a punch to the gut.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Close on her face. She can't believe this is happening. NUMB.

No DIALOGUE
Page 4 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - A matching shot of Susan…staring off, still unable to accept what was happening…still numb. But now, it's dark -- she's in her room with the lights off and we think she's alone.

Caption: Day 3.

Panel 2 - We pull back, and see Reed standing behind her in the doorway.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Reed reaches out to touch, and comfort, her.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - His hand stretches all around her -- the fingers elongating, like thin bandages; they are mimicking/ outlining the shape of a protective bubble around Susan. She's been like this for a while...not wanting anyone to get near her.

NOTE: Throughout all of this, Susan's expression should not change. She never looks back at Reed -- she never acknowledges his presence – she just sits there in her little bubble. Additionally, she's upset with him -- a small piece of her blames him -- because he said he would take care of things while she was gone...instead, he went traipsing halfway across the galaxy.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Reed pulls his hand back.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - Close on his expression. He is angry. He's angry that someone has killed his friend and brother and determined to do something about it.

No DIALOGUE

Page 5 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Reed striding down the hall to his lab. Walking with a purpose.

Caption: Day 4.

Panel 2 - The lab door closes and locks behind him -- visually this should be a very high-tech massive door... nothing is getting through (and it's new, built it since all this happened).

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Reed approaches a wall -- it looks normal and nondescript.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - He puts his hand against it and like some kind of flat, virtual user interface, the wall recognizes his hand and produces a graphic display around it. UNLOCKING something.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Reed steps back, as the wall begins pull apart and fold in on itself. A box slides out of the wall toward Reed. Also, the top of the box begins to flower open. This really should look like something out of a Japanese comic, just impossibly over elaborate...all for this for a little box that comes out.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - We see the inside of the box. It is the Ultimate Nullifier. Reed is reaching for it.

No DIALOGUE

Page 6 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Reed walks over to the Negative Zone portal... there's an interface/podium beside him.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Big panel. Reed stands facing us. Touching the portal controls on the podium with one hand. In the other, he holds the Ultimate Nullifier, which has been switched on and energy is just pouring off of it -- Kirby crackle or something.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - The portal door irising open.

NOTE: There is a force field in between Reed and the Negative Zone. When the door is open this will be a coloring effect (and overlay), so you don't actually have to draw the force field, but note that effect will be there.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - On Kid Annhilus, standing in the portal.

NOTE: Depending on the time frame here, we might not have a final design for Kid Annihilus... Whatever we come up with will need to be approved by Steve.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - On Reed. He clinches his teeth, almost snarling... We never see him like this.

No DIALOGUE

Page 7 - (7 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Kid Annihilus cocks his head sideways, mysterious and looking right at Reed.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - On Reed, his eyes popping open at what he is seeing.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Kid Annihilus is holding up a torn piece of fabric. It's Johnny's uniform...We see the FOUR logo clearly.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Close on Kid Annihilus' face...Is he smiling?

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Reed looking away. Ashamed that all this has happened. Ashamed that there's no win here. Ashamed that he can't do anything for Susan.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - His finger touching a button on the controls.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 7 - The portal to the Negative Zone closing.

No DIALOGUE

Page 8 - (1 PANEL)

NOTE: NO Spider-Man here either.

Panel 1 - The WAKE of Johnny Storm. Everyone is there...all the Avengers, all the X-Men and all the kids from the Future Foundation. Some are in costume, some are not...mix it up, make it visually interesting. A big shot of the room.

Caption: Day 5.

Page 9 - (4 PANELS)

NOTE: We're going to be pulling through the room here so that we can focus on Ben in the background...moving through the crowd toward him. So we'll be able to see Ben in all four of these panels as he gets increasingly larger. Also, we'll want to hide the characters that will be in foreground of each following panel behind the ones in the foreground of the current one.

Panel 1 - Scott Summers talking to Reed Richards in the foreground. In the middle ground, the crowd. And peeking through from the background, a shadowed Ben Grimm.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - We've pulled past Mr. Fantastic and Scott Summers (we can see a bit of [3/4 view?] Reed in the extreme foreground to help set up what we're doing), and can now see that Susan is staring at Reed while She-Hulk and Storm are speaking with her. Behind them are more heroes, and in the background, a little bigger and more noticeable, Ben Grimm.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - We've pulled past Susan, She-Hulk and Storm to see that Namor is staring at Susan. He's pretty much ignoring Captain America and Hawkeye, who are standing with him, chatting. Behind them, a brooding Ben Grimm.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Close on Ben. Angry, and getting angrier by the day. He wants to break something but all he can do is sit here and think about what's happened.

Page 10 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - An invitation to the coronation of Kristoff Vernard.

Caption: Day 6.

Text on invitation
(decorative)
You are hereby summoned to the
CORONATION
and
ROYAL CELEBRATION
of
KRISTOFF VERNARD's
Ascendancy to the Throne of Latveria
Friday, the 23rd. The Castle Doom.

Panel 2 - Looking out at a crowd celebrating. Like Times Square during New Year's...all the citizens of Latveria have come to celebrate the crowning of their new king.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - On Kristoff in his Doom armor (no helmet). He's waving to the crowd, but not smiling big or anything like that...noble, regal. He's on an outdoor balcony, high above all the people, jutting out of Doom's Castle.

NOTE: Kristoff should be dressed like he normally is -- like Doom -- but coloring-wise, I'd like to play with his outfit NOT being green. AND let's see a sketch here, as Steve needs to approve it.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Inside the castle. Kristoff turns/spins and walks toward two guards who are pulling back the curtains that separate the balcony from the throne room.

No DIALOGUE

Page 11 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Close on Kristoff's face as he speaks.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - All the gathered nobility bowing in acquiescence as Kristof stands before them -- the new ruler of Latveria.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - On Kristoff's face -- he looks up at something.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - In the throne room, there is a heavily shadowed, private gallery that overlooks the main chamber. From there, Doom and Boris look down at Kristoff. He is watching his being replaced.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Close on Doom… This is all so...unacceptable.

No DIALOGUE

Page 12 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - A matching shot of the previous image of Doom. But this time his robe is BLACK instead of GREEN.
Caption: Day 8.

Panel 2 - We pull back and see that he is standing outside a limo. Boris is wearing a black dress suit and stands beside/behind him, holding open the limo door. A large, overhanging tree covers them in shadows.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - We pull back further and see that Val is looking back over her shoulder at Doom in the distance.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - And now we see the family. We are at the funeral of Johnny Storm. Val and Franklin are holding hands. A tired-looking Mr. Fantastic has his hand on Franklin's shoulder. Susan and Reed stand beside each other, but not touching. Ben stands behind them, his head down.

NOTE: Sue and Reed are still on the rocks a bit…there's still friction there, and -- this is very important -- at no point during these panels should Ben look up at the statue of Johnny (more on that below).

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Key on Ben and Susan. Ben, hulking behind her, has his head down and is looking away. Susan cuts her eyes over at Reed. She knows this has been just as tough for him. As the shock and irrationality of tragedy subsides, clarity of the situation comes into focus. "Reed had to do what he did."

No DIALOGUE

Page 13 - (3 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Susan reaches over and grabs Reed's hand.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Reed looks over at her, but, she's focused back on Johnny. He eyes and chin are raised…looking up at what's in the next panel.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - We pull back to see -- for the first time, really -- that we are at the funeral for Johnny Storm. Now, obviously there is no casket here, just a statue of Johnny with one of those eternal flame things burning in his upturned palm. Random heroes make out the crowd.

No DIALOGUE

Page 14 - (3 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Spider-Man swinging through Manhattan high-rises. In the background, the Baxter Building.

Caption: Day 14.

Panel 2 - And overhead shot of the Baxter Building. From behind, a tiny Franklin sits on the edge of the roof looking out. In the background, Spider-Man swinging.

No DIALOGUE
Panel 3 - Looking up at Franklin. Sad. Moping. Not paying attention to Spider-Man and clearly still dealing with things. (And this leads to our 8-page backup).

No DIALOGUE

Page 15 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - We're in the classroom with the kids of the Future Foundation. All the kids are there. Some are in desks, some are standing around... Regardless, they are all listening to Val, who is standing at the front of the classroom beside the blackboard.
Caption: Day 20.

Panel 2 - On Val and the blackboard. It should say:
Text on board

TO-DO LIST:
Find Potential Replacements:

She-Hulk
Storm
Black Panther
Wyatt Wingfoot
Alex Power
Luke Cage
Iron Fist

Panel 3 - We're looking at the kids as they are listening to Val...she has their interest.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - On Val erasing what's on the blackboard.

No DIALOGUE

Page 16 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Very close on Val's face. Serious as a heart attack.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - She turns and begins to write something new on the blackboard. Frame this so that we cannot see what she is writing. Maybe an overhead or a profile shot.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - On the kids in the classroom reacting to what she is writing…surprise and shock on their face. Except for Bentley…who's smiling. And Alex, who looks determined.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Val standing in front of the classroom holding a piece of chalk using it to point back at the blackboard at what she is written. On the blackboard it should say:

TEXT ON BOARD
TO-DO LIST:

Kill Annihilus.

Page 17 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - On an Avengers logo (like a signal or something).

Caption: Day 26.

Panel 2 - The Fantasticar (Steve's version) landing in the desert. Two men stand there waiting for it.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Ben Grimm walking toward us from the car in the background…walking toward the two men.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - On the two men. Dr. Donald Blake and Bruce Banner.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - On all three men talking. Bruce Banner is holding a circular disc from which a hologram of the Statue of Johnny is being projected.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - On Ben Grimm turning to walk away, motioning with his hand…"THIS is what you guys needed? Well, you can both go %$#@ yourselves."

No DIALOGUE

Page 18 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Dr. Blake smashing his cane on the ground. Lightning strikes.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Thor stands in his place.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Close on Thor, he's pointing at Ben with his hammer.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Ben turns yelling, screaming at him.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Thor catches Ben by the arm/shoulder. Stopping him from leaving.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - Close on Ben cutting his eyes back at us…"Oh no, you didn't..."

No DIALOGUE

Page 19 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Ben punches Thor, sending him flying.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Ben Grimm's yelling at Thor being interrupted by a shadow falling over him.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Same as above, except that Ben is now looking over at someone else his eyes wide.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - The Hulk stands where Banner was. One eyebrow raised.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - The Hulk smashes him. Ben flies off towards the Fantasti-car.

No DIALOGUE

Page 20 - (5 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Ben grabbing the Fantasticar and lifting it over his head. (He's going to smash it over the Hulk's head, so frame it so that logistically that will work). Thor should be getting to his feet in the foreground.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - Ben smashes the car down on the Hulk.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Thor yells out.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Hulk motions for Thor to "HOLD ON -- I'M FINE. LEAVE IT TO ME."

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Ben attacks the Hulk punching him -- the Hulk just stands there, taking it.

No DIALOGUE

Page 21 - (6 PANELS)

Panel 1 - Ben still punching.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - On the Hulk, looking down at Ben as he hits him again. Not as hard this time.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - Ben now just kind of banging his fist against Hulk's chest.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Ben now just collapsing against the Hulk. "My friend is dead and I couldn't do anything to stop it." We can't see him crying, but his body language should imply that he's sobbing.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 5 - Hulk puts his arm around Ben, holding/hugging him.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 6 - Thor looks on. A tear in his eye.

NOTE: The stuff with Hulk and Ben is all about body language. We've got to sell that he had to physically break down before he could emotionally -- A first step to recovery.

No DIALOGUE

Page 22 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - On Reed in his lab. A wide shot.

Caption: Day 29.

Panel 2 - Reed rubbing his temples. He's exhausted. Everyone is getting better, but for him, all he sees is the tidal wave of upcoming disasters.

No DIALOGUE

Panel 3 - He looks down, right at us (toward the monitor he's in front of).

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - The display showing what he is looking at:

A list of things that are inevitable.

NOTE: Leave for the colorist. As this needs to be a colorhold/fx.

List	THREAT LEVEL
Invasion from the Negative Zone.	High
Invasion from Universal Inhumans.	High
Celestial Invasion via Bridge.	Medium
Franklin power set.	High

Page 23 - (4 PANELS)

Panel 1 - We look at him again, he looks broken, past exhaustion… Can all of this even be done?

No DIALOGUE

Panel 2 - We look at the display again…closer... focusing on:

NOTE: Again, leave for the colorist.

List	THREAT LEVEL
Galactus: Destruction of Earth.	High
Reformation of the Council.	Necessary

Panel 3 - Again on Reed, closer…impossible choices on top of impossible choices…and there's absolutely no one who can understand exactly what he's going through...

No DIALOGUE

Panel 4 - Or is there? A light flashing in his lab startles him... He turns to look at it…

Reed: My god…

Page 24 - (1 PANEL)

Panel 1 - It's Nathaniel Richards (in his space/time suit). Reed's father has come home for good.

Nathaniel: Hello, son...
(tail)
I'm home.

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ZONE